THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

Two Shillings and Sixpence net

Student Christian Movement

THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

THE PURPOSE OF GOD
IN THE
LIFE OF THE WORLD

BEING SOME OF THE ADDRESSES
DELIVERED AT A CONFERENCE ON
INTERNATIONAL AND MISSIONARY
QUESTIONS,
LIVERPOOL, JANUARY 2nd—7th, 1929

LONDON
STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT
32 RUSSELL SQUARE, W.C.1
1929

EDITORIAL NOTE

BEFORE Mr. Hugh Martin left for India in the autumn to represent the S.C.M., he asked me to take his place as editor of the volume which was designed to prolong the message of Liverpool. It is always an honour to serve the S.C.M. ; but the task was unfamiliar, and I could not have done it at all but for the cheerful and sympathetic co-operation of the speakers and others. Speed in production is essential for a book like this ; and if that means a lack of that finish and correctness in detail after which editors strive, the blame must not rest upon the speakers.

E. S.

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Chairman : The Rev. R. O. Hall, M.A., Brasenose College, Oxford, Vicar of St. Luke's, Newcastle ; formerly Missionary Secretary of the Student Christian Movement.

Vice-Chairman : Robert C. Mackie, M.A., Glasgow University ; Chairman of the General Committee of the Student Christian Movement.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2ND

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The Church of England—The Bishop of Liverpool.

The Free Churches—The Rev. S. M. Morris, President of the Free Church Council.

The City of Liverpool—The Lord Mayor of Liverpool.

REPLY TO ADDRESSES OF WELCOME

Dr. Tissington Tatlow, General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

The Rev. R. O. Hall.

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GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD. IN THE RE-MAKING OF A NATION

Dr. T. Z. Koo.

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VOCATION AND FELLOWSHIP

The Master of Balliol.

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YE ARE MY FRIENDS

Mr. John Macmurray.

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The Rev. David Phillips, Principal of Bala College, Wales.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD. GROUNDS OF THE CHRISTIAN ASSUMPTION

The Rev. Canon Raven.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD. IN RACIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Mr. C. F. Andrews.

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EDUCATION AND EVANGELISM

Mr. F. F. Monk and the Rev. G. D. Reynolds.

SCIENCE AND THE IDEA OF GOD.

(i) INORGANIC SCIENCE AND INORGANIC FINALITY

Mr. John Macmurray.

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

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THE NEW LIFE IN JAPAN

The Rev. W. H. Murray Walton.

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SOME INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF INDUSTRY

Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree.

INDIA OF TO-DAY

Dr. S. K. Datta, M.B., Ch.B. (Edin.).

THE AFRICAN'S NEED OF A GOSPEL

Mr. K. T. Moseti, B.D.

THE NEW WORLD OF ISLAM

The Rev. L. E. Browne.

THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY AND THE NATIVE CHURCH

Rev. E. G. Bentley and Rev. John Stewart.

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Mr. W. Benson.

THE DOCTOR IN AFRICA

Dr. T. B. Adam and Dr. H. C. Victor Joy.

MOVEMENTS OF THOUGHT AMONG SOUTH AMERICAN STUDENTS

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The Rev. Canon Head.

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The Rev. W. R. Maltby.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD. IN INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRY

Mr. Ben Turner.

AFTERNOON SESSION

THE CALL TO MISSIONARY SERVICE

Mr. J. H. Oldham.

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THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL TO KNOW GOD

The Rev. Canon Spanton.

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THE WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION

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THE DEDICATION OF THE MIND

The Archbishop of York.

(This meeting was broadcast by the B.B.C.)

PROGRAMME

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Dr. S. K. Datta.

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MISSIONS AND REUNION
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SOME INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF INDUSTRY
Miss Mary Dingman.

THE GOSPEL AND THE AFRICAN FARMER
Rev. T. L. Beveridge.

THE CALL TO AFRICA
Dr. Donald Fraser.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN CHINA
Miss Dorothy Hutchinson, B.A.

THE NEW TEACHER IN THE NEW CHINA
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PROGRAMME

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Mr. W. Benson.

THE DOCTOR IN CHINA

Mr. J. W. Pell, F.R.C.S. (Edin.), and Dr. Giles Hall, M.D., B.S.

THE WOMAN DOCTOR:

IN AFRICA

Mrs. Donald Fraser, M.B., Ch.B. (Glas.).

IN INDIA

Dr. Constance Whittaker, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

EVENING SESSION (*in the Cathedral*)

SERVICE OF DEDICATION

Dr. Tissington Tatlow.

Address, THE DEDICATION OF LIFE

The Bishop of Liverpool.

AN IMPRESSION OF THE CONFERENCE

The Rev. Edward Shillito, M.A.

AN IMPRESSION OF THE CONFERENCE

I

Liverpool, 1929, cannot be interpreted apart from a background which can never be put into words. Every morning the members of the Conference met for recollection, penitence, and expectation in the Cathedral. With the memories of the addresses which are printed here there will be blended the vision of the Cathedral rising above the city in the grey light of the wintry morning. The Cathedral itself must have seemed to the members of the Conference to belong to their own age. For the Cathedral also is young. It speaks of hands of faith uplifted in this age, and of the beauty, mystery and holiness of the Lord of the World still drawing near to men. In that place many beheld the Lord high and lifted up and His train filled the temple. There the heart and mind were bowed before Him, Who is indeed through all and in all, the Friend of Man, but is never known perfectly until He is seen also to be above all, the Alpha and the Omega. There one day we heard the words of the Lord God out of the whirlwind: and the warning was not unheeded.

Who is this that darkeneth counsel
By words without knowledge ?
Gird up thou thy loins like a man;
For I will demand of thee, and declare
thou unto me.

II

At Liverpool it was not the speakers but the hearers who first arrested the attention of the observer. This Conference is held once every four years—only once, and therefore its members would not be present at another Conference ; by the time that comes round, they will be out of hearing, and for many the great choice will have been made. Other Assemblies disperse and meet again, this had about it a certain finality. Questions were put, vows were made once for all. There were nearly two thousand members, of whom more than three-quarters were still among those who had their life to give ; and before all things the Conference was meant to be a place in which one generation of students might see clearly the way of their life.

Their presence spoke of the new age. An almost overwhelming sense of the greatness and the boundless hope of the moment came upon those who were no longer young.

" I wish I was a young man again," said one speaker who had been ordained in the year of the first Liverpool Conference, 1896. The Conference was a fragment of a future rich in promise; its members the advance guard of a great age.

III

The memory of the years 1896, 1908 and 1912, in which similar Conferences were held in Liverpool, had its place in the spiritual life of the Conference. From 1896 there were still with us Miss Ruth Rouse, Dr. Donald Fraser and others. The history of missionary service owes much to the Student Volunteer Movement ; more than fifteen thousand volunteers have sailed since the Movement began. Such a tradition could not fail to have its power. The Student Movement began with a passion for the winning of the world for Christ. It has added to its " concerns," to use the Quaker word, a zeal for social justice, for international peace, for the fearless study of science and the interpretation of the Bible in the light of modern knowledge, but it has not lost its early passion. When every four years it takes stock of its life it reports many new visions and tasks, but all of them comprehended in the old unchanging passion that God in Christ may be all in all, and that all the children of men shall know Him. It changes ; but *the more it changes the more it remains the same*. The programme of this Conference on the surface would look strangely different from that of 1896. But only on the surface.

IV

It is a strange and changed world upon which men look to-day. Its unity in sorrow and need is better understood. The breakdown of many hopes

cherished in 1896 must be recorded. The home base is now a mission field, the " foreign " scene in the East and the South is a parish with a Church set within it. Industrial problems are seen now in their spiritual implications and the Christian Church cannot ignore them if it believes that man has a right to salvation, and that whatever robs him of that right is contrary to the will of Christ. That was true of slavery ; it is still true of economic conditions which refuse man his right to the life in Christ. From such things at Liverpool, 1929, it was impossible to disentangle the missionary enterprise. During the Conference in sections and groups there was much careful dealing with the missionary problem. The note struck so clearly at Jerusalem, 1928, was prolonged and reiterated in many ways. This is made plain in the address of Mr. J. H. Oldham. But there were three other addresses which should be read with it ; the plea for brotherhood in industry by Mr. Ben Turner, the convincing and arresting address on *God in the Remaking of China* by Mr. Koo, and the prophetic pleading of Mr. C. F. Andrews for the martyr-spirit whereby alone the racial troubles of the world can be healed.

The study of fields is important still, but of less importance than the study of the needs and sorrows in which all men share. There is but one human family, stricken down together, to be raised together. Some may say as they read these addresses for the first time—Where is the missionary appeal ? If they read them a second time they will say that it is everywhere. For to-day the enemy to be

fought is the same in all lands ; and whether a student gives his life to research at home, or to missionary work abroad, he is in the same conflict.

v

The Conference began with the questions which the students are asking ; the answers were given by speakers with the best wisdom granted them ; but after they had spoken the students were called upon in their turn to answer the practical question how far they were willing to test in action " that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Those who came with questions were left at the end to make answers. Those answers cannot yet be recorded. *Liverpool*, 1929, must remain a noble beginning.

These addresses cover much ground ; in them will be found a brief sketch of the evolutionary process as a single " consistent movement, expressing love's eternal purpose, aspiring ever towards love's fulfilment in conscious fellowship with God." In these addresses will be found a witness to the Incarnate Lord, in the days of His flesh and in the ceaseless working of His Spirit ; in them the Community of the Loyal is set forth, and throughout His voice is round us " like a bursting sea." There were scientists, historians, philosophers, theologians speaking. But they would admit that their word could but prepare the way of the Lord. That word would not be complete till the answers to that hour were recorded in terms of lives, offered to the life of the world. Even God cannot

say in words all that He needs us to know ; still less can His servants. The real history of the Conference will be told in action which for the most has still to be done. At the back of the platform was a scroll with Chinese characters written upon it in which the Christian students of China invited those of Britain " to move forward together in their great adventure."

VI

The keyword for those who approached the Conference from the side of the students was " friendship." Here at least was common ground. Never more than in that hour would the members of that Conference know what it means to be a " friend." In terms of that experience they were able to interpret the needs of the world. The relations between human beings were debased and perverted from their right usage for the lack of friendship. Yet the range of the needs of the world, never so known as now, made mockery of friendship such as we can offer. The tragedy of the moment is that sensitive minds have a knowledge of the suffering of the world altogether beyond their power to help ; they are paralysed and are tempted in despair to think of the story of mankind as purposeless. The very gift which they have to offer is too small when it is measured against the relentless powers which seem to prevail. We are like Peter drowning in the Sea of Galilee, not because he had no faith, but because he had not enough.

VII

It is certainly possible to reduce our problems, economic and international, to problems in personal relations, and so to show that the deepest need of the world is for some new power and hope in the realm of the spirit. But who is to give this ? Friends ! But what does it mean to be a friend ? One by one the speakers dealt with this question and revealed new depths of meaning in the familiar word. To be a friend was more than to obey a duty or to render a service. Sentimentality was a betrayal of friendship ; honest hatred was better than that. Friendship was more than friendliness, which was indeed a paltry substitute whereby we sought to escape from being a friend. " We seek not yours but you," St. Paul said. " We are willing not only to spend, but to be spent." Yet friendship was not sacrifice. It was the giving of self to another, and the finding of self in another. But where has this rich and mysterious thought of friendship been learned ? There is only one answer—" We love because He first loved us."

VIII

From the pathway of friendship, as it is known to man in his personal life, two roads open out, one into the mystery of the Christian revelation, and the other into the life of the world. Those who found themselves faced by a new sense of the glory of friendship, and its imperfections in themselves, were called to take first of all the way into the

heart of all things. Before they could be friends of man they must become, or rather be made, friends of God.

Therefore speakers sought to interpret the Gospel in the same language. The Purpose of God is to offer to men in Christ that personal relationship which is known to us in part as friendship. But as speaker after speaker spoke on this theme and the Purpose of God was interpreted in the sweep of its operations, the word " friend " had to be, as it were, baptised. It was magnified and transfigured. It was seen to involve repentance, which is the adjustment of the mind to the strange new fact of God's love ; forgiveness, which is the restoration of personal relations broken by sin ; the new birth and the life everlasting—all these were read into that word.

In this new life given by the Saviour, there was no place for legal and formal obligation. Not servants, but friends ! It seems as if into this word there came to be read what was meant by grace and faith. The friends of Christ are redeemed friends who have come to know whence come their longings and aspirations after fellowship. So the way led naturally to prayer. Prayer, too, is the converse of friends with that Other Friend in Whom we find ourselves for the first time, from Whom we receive a new hope and confidence.

IX

But it was not the end of the Conference that a number of men and women should be carried

away into the mystical vision. The other way was still there, crowded not with dreadful faces, but with perplexed and sorrowful faces. No one who knew the mind of the Conference could ever ignore the dark facts which pressed upon its members.

The more complex the world becomes, the more it needs personal character. But where are the roots of this character to be found ? This selfless devotion for which we prayed day after day in the words of St. Ignatius Loyola was indeed needed. We had to love our neighbour, but that was not an easy or obvious thing. The lot of the miners in Wales could never be absent from the thoughts of the Conference ; some of its members had known it at first hand ; the peril of war which would end Western Civilisation could not be forgotten in an Assembly in which nearly forty nations were represented. The failure so far to take any serious steps in disarmament ; the dilemma of the awakening East ; the sorrow of the dark races seeking from the West not so much philanthropy as atonement,—these problems were always with us. To bring help into such a world we must have new resources, and it was into such a world the delegates departed.

X

Whether we left the Philharmonic Hall bound for the restaurant or for the New Jerusalem, we had to take the necessary first steps. Towards the close of the Conference the speakers made it their aim to give practical counsel upon the first steps.

There would be some whose task it would be to serve God in the fearless search for new knowledge, and they might have to go into the darkness to win truth for mankind. Some would be called to bring into the service of industry their new insight into the meaning of friendship, or into the clash of races, or into the direct missionary service of the Church as preachers or doctors or teachers. But for all there would be the presence of the Redeemer, there would be the joy and strength of prayer, and the fellowship of the Christian Church. For all, the public worship in which the Loyal share, for without prayer and the public worship, " the whole Christian line will be smashed in an hour."

Such thoughts and much more than these will be found in this book. By this time those who saw the vision together are scattered. Some will have begun to doubt whether they ever heard these words and saw the visions which they called up. This book will fulfil its purpose, if once more it recalls those who were in Liverpool to the glory, altogether wonderful and satisfying, which we saw in the face of Jesus Christ. If the words spoken awaken in the soul that which could never be expressed ; if those who read them are carried back to Liverpool and there offer once more their greatest experience of friendship into the hands of their Lord ; if once more they come back to tread the way of friendship into the heart of the world in this hour of destiny, then the book will have fulfilled its purpose, and in these pages *Liverpool*, 1929, will be prolonged.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

THE REV. R. O. HALL, M.A.,
Vicar of St. Luke's, Newcastle. Formerly Missionary Secretary of the Student Christian Movement

THE PURPOSE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

Camels and donkeys are two of the most delightfully ludicrous things God ever made for love and laughter. But if He made them ludicrous He has made them tireless. That is the point. It was a donkey carried Jesus, still unborn, to Bethlehem, and on as a dear and aching armful into Egypt. Then as a boy camels were his wireless sets, and his aeroplanes. As a young man they meant for him what the weekly edition of *The Manchester Guardian* means to the Student Movement today. They told him of the kingdoms and the nations of the earth. I have seen them padding into Peking—long, lumbering, swaying lines of them. Dusty! You don't know what dust is till you have seen a camel caravan. Dust-laden, dust-smothered, but not dust-bothered. You can't bother a camel. He's the complete agnostic. That is how Jesus used to see them and their apple-yellow, eager-eyed drivers, only too ready to exercise their few Aramaic words on the Galilean lads as they packed the dry grass into their miniature pipe bowls for their evening smoke, contented because the last day of their journey had come. From Tyre the ships took their silks to Rome and Spain, and perhaps to Cornwall and round the

coast of Africa. With his mind full of the camels and their drivers' tales, Jesus would read in the Scriptures that Jerusalem was to be the Queen of these nations of strange folk, and that his people's God was their God—their Maker, and their Father.

And his great heart yearned over them till he was tempted to use wrong means to reach them, and gather them, too, under the wings of his eager-hearted love.

He told them when he preached his first sermon in his old home church all that he had learned from the camels and their friendly drivers. And he proved it from Scripture, quoting Naaman and the Sidonian widow. But they drove him out and would have killed him.

This people of his Father's choosing, of his Father's making, would not understand. So he gave his life, to gather from among these lost sheep of the House of Israel a new people—to do His Father's will. Then they broke his body on the Cross. But they could not break the new Body he had made. Again and again they scattered it, only to find it alive and growing into full bodily health again in every place whither they had scattered it. Much is written about the difference Jesus has made to our knowledge of God. Much, perhaps too much, is written about his suggestions for human conduct. To-night we are to think what difference he has made, is making and will make, to the world and our view of it. Don't forget, then, when you next see a camel, to say thank you.

Of course you have all played charades. There

is a series of endless antics by the performers and countless suggestions by the audience: then finally someone gets it. There is a woman tearing off an imaginary something from her face—"Constantinople" says someone—and bit by bit the other acted syllables all become clear.

I believe that Jesus can do something like that for us as we look at the world. He can give the word which gives meaning to the whole. Don't expect him to make it all too tidy for you. He wouldn't have loved camels if he'd cared for tidiness. He left tidiness to the Scribes and Pharisees. But I think the word he gives us, gives us something to live by, without taking away room to grow, or things to think about—and the word is friendship.

The first syllable of the charade is the drama of the world's religion. The Chinese villager talks of the heavenly grandfather while he propitiates the God of the kitchen, and his old mother draws compassion out of the heart of Unseen muttering "*Amidho-fu, Amidho-fu*": Zoroaster shares a religious experience like Isaiah's. Hinduism worships the whole of experience till its mind swims and its heart sinks, and its hands clutch at *avatars* —incarnations of the whole, which can claim men's worship and devotion in reckless *bhakti*: Mahomet, horrified by the superstitions of the Christians of his slight acquaintance, conscious of a pure fire in the heart of the unseen sends Arabia out on a religious quest only equalled in its pathos by the Christian Crusades, and in its power by the ardent monotheism of the Jews.

If Jesus is right about God, if God is like Jesus Christ, the drama of the world's religion becomes intelligible. It is God seeking the friendship of all his creatures; but refusing, as Jesus refused, to force the love of any of them.

The next scene has a destitute mining village in one corner, a Chinese village in another displaying an advertisement for Johnnie Walker's whiskey, and in the centre the cafés on the Quayside of Newcastle where men are doing business over coffee and a cigarette.

And the answer again is Jesus' answer, the nations are made for brotherhood and friendship. We can only live if other nations will take our coal. China, whether it is good for her or not, wants what we can make, as we want what she can make. And the cup of coffee is like the Cup at the Last Supper, the sacrament, the symbol, the outward and visible sign of Brotherhood. Commerce is made by friendship and made for friendship, and cannot live without it.

The next scene is in West Africa. Two English and one Japanese doctor dying one after another of yellow fever in their search for its causes. There is the greatest wonder of the world we live in. There are few things more Christ-like than the ruthless honesty and reckless self-sacrifice of the pure scientist. There is nothing more creative than his readiness to share his knowledge. Science alone has no natural barriers. Whatever some scientists say, what they do shouts louder, proclaiming that there is a spirit in man greater than he knows, that a great purpose of friendship built

on reckless service lies behind the terrible untidiness and callousness and awesomeness of living matter. Then there are other scenes in the charade that break your heart and drive the mind to madness, so that with Mary Webb's Little Minister one cries out in anger: "There is no God—Jesus is only a brave, loving soul hunted to death." In the last eighteen months I have baptised eighty babies; twenty came from one-roomed homes, and of these four died before they were six months old. Of the other sixty none have died. Those are only figures until one of them happens to be your baby—then you have to get over it as best you can to be ready for the next, and the next, and the next. I have buried an old lady of nearly ninety living with a sixty-year old niece on 27s. 6d. a week and paying 11s. of that for one basement room.

But worse, far worse than murdered babies and rent-racked widows, I have seen, yes, in eighteen months, girls as fresh and bright as the morning, coffin their faces in paint and powder and make men's eyes and hands the God they worship; and lads as clear and straight as a frosty night let filth and meanness run deep channels in their minds.

I have spent hours with drunken husbands and held the hands of husband and wife from beating and scratching each other. And I know that what may happen in a few months in my small experience is happening everywhere all over the world.

But that is not all. I have seen a mother nurse a burnt child in her arms for ten days and ten nights, with only snatches of armchair sleep, and

so save its life. I have seen parents' faces grow pinched and strained and hunted as meal by meal and day by day they have given their food to their children. It is no sufficient answer to the riddle, but it is a fact—a plain, solid fact, that though evil can break friendship, it cannot kill it. The very success of evil becomes the opportunity for a further triumph for friendship and for love. Crucifixion is universal, but so is resurrection.

> Our God, death cannot hold him
> Nor earth contain.

So standing here to-night I want to say that I believe that God means the world for friendship—friendship between nations, friendship between men, and above all and in it all friendship between man and God.

And with you I thank God for the camels by whose means Jesus learnt to know the world was full of men and women and set about to win all of them for his friendship.

But still one asks—Why is it such a hard business and why so slow ? It is hard, of course, because a glow-worm's heat can only make poems, not steel. Steel needs a furnace. It is slow, because personality is so precious, so sacred to God that he will not force himself upon it. The modern novel has lost something in making our modern lover plunge in the first chapter and marry in the second, with complications, with or without a happy ending for the rest. The fear of the Victorian novelist hero lest he hurry his lady too fast—lest he break some

fundamental respect for her—is one of the best things in life.

There is an immense courtesy in friendship and in love—courtesy in the good old English sense that Mr. Hilaire Belloc has recaptured for us when he wrote :

> Of Courtesy it is much less
> Than courage of Heart and Holiness.
> But in my walks it seems to me
> That the Grace of God is in Courtesy.

And again of the Babe of Bethlehem :

> He is so small you cannot see
> His large intent of Courtesy.

True friendship is incredibly courteous.

The Bible is the story of the courtesy of the friendship of God, and the modern missionary enterprise is the sequel to that story. The Swan Song is not yet written to this Saga. If God would have had us clever without friendship, he could have tutored us with ruler ever ready for our fingers. If he would have had us good without friendship, he could have made us less prone to evil, and so less in need of his friendship and his help. He could have made us as spotless and insipid as your sister's Christmas doll—utterly without sin, but a little deficient in spunk. Or he could have accepted the brilliantly naïf suggestion of a hopeful fresher : " He could have killed Adam and Eve and made them over again." Instead He set about to win our friendship. And if a great soul offered him an inch, he gave him an ell. That is

ever friendship's way ; as you will discover when you offer your puny self to a good woman or a good man, and get back in return such a wonder of self-giving as eternity can never empty.

But his great chance came when a people gave themselves in response to his call, to be the people of his friendship's purpose. One after another of her folk—Abraham the friend of God—Moses—Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, and then in more rapid succession—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the others, offered him their friendship, and found for themselves, and for us, their great reward.

Then came his greatest opportunity of all—" Behold the handmaid of the Lord—be it unto me according to Thy Will." This people of his were ready at last for their final great offering of friendship. Friendship is only real on a basis of equality. He made himself men's equal. In a simple village home, they welcomed God himself, and for a short while they heard him gladly. Then they tired of him. Beyond the city wall they nailed them, his friendship and himself, both together to the tree. But he was God ; so Death could not be the end. He was courteous, so he could not leave them in their great confusion ; but came again to live on, an unseen manhood presence in the fellowship of those who loved him still. And still with the same courtesy he is working through them, in them, with them, to reveal to all men the eager readiness and the great burning fire of his creative friendship.

To us he says, with that immeasurable courtesy

of his love, " in this friendship " he says to us— " in this friendship with one another, and, if you will, as I so yearn for it, friendship with Me, your Maker, your Father, your First Great Friend of All ; in this friendship is the meaning of the world and of your life."

THE CHOICE CHRIST MADE

The Rev. F. R. Barry, M.A.,
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THE CHOICE CHRIST MADE

Let us start in the Christmas atmosphere. Bethlehem, when you go and see it, seems to stand on the very edge of the world. It is the last inhabited village—a human outpost on the Judæan hills before they plunge down into the Southern desert. It stands, as it were, on the frontier of redeemed, human territory—a " house of bread," of home and kindly things on the edge of the vast inhospitable spaces that encompass the Holy Land about. It was so, and is, in a more pregnant sense than that—the centre of all that makes it possible for the spirits of mortal men to feel at home in the midst of a wild, terrifying Universe. We are met here to ask the question—what is God's purpose in the world ? and Christians claim that you will find the answer if you go to Bethlehem. But behind the arrival of the Babe, there is a Prologue written in Eternity. In the beginning was the Logos—that is to say, the Universe *means* something : there is a purpose at the heart of it. And if there is a purpose, there is a God : to speak of an impersonal purpose is to use words which have no real meaning. What sense is there in the notion of a Purpose which is not the purpose of any particular mind ? If there is a meaning at all there is God. The Word was with God and the Word was God.

That is the preliminary assumption on which the question we are here to ask—indeed Christianity itself—is founded. The question we are asking ourselves is—What is the nature of this purpose ? What is God doing with His world ? To that question Christianity claims to have the answer. It does not claim to give an explanation of all the problems in the Universe—and nobody but a lunatic would—but it claims to give us light enough to live by. It claims that in the consciousness of Jesus, and the life and death which uttered it in act, the Divine Purpose at the heart of life flashes out into sight and touch within the context of man's experience. Men's eyes have seen it and their hands have handled it. That is the conviction of Christianity, and that, remember, was also His own—shaping itself in His mind, inevitably, in the thought-forms of His own time and people. He believed Himself to be Messiah, the consummation (that is to say) of History, the focus of the Divine Plan for men, the inaugurator of the New Age, the unique interpreter of the Mind of God. Whatever anyone may think about it there is certainly no doubt at all that that was His central conviction.

He steps forth into history at a time when vast movements and complexities were sweeping across the Mediterranean world. " In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar," when the mighty experiment of the Roman Empire was forcing the world to become a neighbourhood, weaving mankind into strange new patterns, forcing them into closeness of contact and an intimacy of racial

intercourse such as the world had never known before. Under the pressure of Roman imperialism established cultures were being standardised, ancient institutions undermined by new political and racial contacts. There was the alarming impact on Western life of ubiquitous Oriental civilisation, with its luxury, its science, its individualism, sweeping over the whole Western world. The advancing tide of secular education—" Rhetoric," the ancient world called it—was teaching men how to be clever without teaching them to be good. Under the pressure of all these various forces the ancient faiths and loyalties were collapsing. A sense of insecurity and decay was eating into the soul of the Roman Empire : a fear of life, a disillusionment lay heavy on the souls of all men : " without hope and without God in the world." There was everywhere the haunting recognition that the world had lost its sense of direction. In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar He steps forth into history. (It is a tale we seem to have heard before.) His followers went to that bewildered world, announcing that they had found the answer : that the meaning and purpose of life had been revealed, that a redemptive vision had been given to it, that recreative forces were at work in it to lift mankind to a Divine destiny : and that all was centred in their Master, Jesus.

What had He done to justify that claim ? What had He said about all these tangled problems ? What line did He take ? What gesture had He made ? All they could say was that He had made

friends with a few fishermen in Galilee, that He had then got Himself crucified, and that death, so they claimed, had had no dominion over Him. That was all they had to say at first, and the world said, " What a silly story "—to the Jews a scandal, to the Gentiles nonsense. A crucified Messiah—is that all ? What is His message of enlightenment in all this tangle of politics and life ? It is (they said) a Gospel of death : it empties life of all its concrete content : it is the denial of life altogether. And our generation too feels rather uneasy. With all this weight of complexity upon us, there is so little in the record of Him that seems to evince any vivid interest in the things which we know to be urgent and worth while—economics, intellectual research, æsthetic values and all the rest. He seems to have paid no attention at all to these things. How can He speak to our complex civilisation, and guide our feet into the way of peace ?

This criticism rests on real insight, only it has not quite insight enough. It just fails to reach to the heart of what the Christian Gospel really is. The life of Our Lord, like that of St. Francis of Assisi, was deliberately emptied of much that for us gives life its preciousness, that so it might be the focus and embodiment of the innermost secret of life itself. What gives a man his place in history and his creativeness in other people's lives is not the number of things he has achieved, but the quality of his response to life. *Make the tree good*, as He said. His concern was with life itself. He did not spread Himself all over life : His concern was with the heart of it. *When he had found the*

one pearl of great price—that is the keynote of the whole New Testament. He was concerned to reveal the master value, without which all the other values which we seek and prize turn sour on us. His concern was with the innermost essence and significance of life itself. His own world was bristling with problems of every kind—Jewish nationalism, for example, which dominated everybody's thought, the violent economic contrasts between the over-rich and the submerged poor, and a number of other urgent questions, all crying out for brave leadership. With them all He seems to have been unconcerned: whenever He was challenged about any of them He seems to have evaded a direct answer. Not in any of these lay His vocation. That, I believe, is the real heart of the mysterious story of His temptation. These things made their appeal to Him, but He extruded them from His mind as disloyalty to His vocation: not in these lay the Will of God for Him. He was concerned with the one pearl of great price. Let us just recall the story of the Temptation. It follows immediately on the Baptism, when the decisive experience had come to Him. He knew Himself now to be Messiah, on Whom the lines of History converged, Who was the Inaugurator of God's New Age, Who held the key to the human future, Who was the unique Revealer and Interpreter of the Divine thought and will. He was clothed with endowments and prerogatives which had come to none other of the sons of men. He was about thirty, at the prime of life, with all His powers at their radiant best. He looks down the

avenues of the future, and faces the question of spiritual leadership for Him, in the circumstances of His day. He stands at the open gate of life, conscious of a unique vocation, hearing the voices every young man hears, calling him down a hundred different paths. Before Him stand a hundred open avenues, each promising a great career crowned with immediate and brilliant success. The voices come, calling Him to follow down one after another of these paths : and each suggestion He repudiates. " If Thou *art* the Son of God," but He said they were not the Voice of God at all. What should He do ? Should He repeat what all the great figures in history had done ? Should He be content with the old nostrums ? Should He be content with economic redress, with the shifting the balance of political power, or even with some cheap religion which should re-direct the loyalties of mankind ? He said what the world wanted most was not bread, not better government, not religion even, but God. He might have taken any one of these paths : He might have achieved immediate, golden success, but He would have left the heart of the problem untouched. He believed that men were restless and unhappy, that the life of the world was out of joint, that men and women, seeking their own ends, came at cross purposes with one another, because they were living for wrong things : they were out of right relationship to God. The desperate need of the world was a God to worship, and a God to trust ; a knowledge of God's Will for His world. And if they would know what God's Will was,

they must first know the character expressed in it, they must first know the mind of God Himself. That was Our Lord's vocation : on that His whole life was concentrated. And He carried it through triumphantly within those cramping limitations which the conditions of life into which He came, and His own deliberate choice, imposed upon Him. His whole life was a concentration on bringing to men the one pearl of great price, on showing the world the character of God.

How did He do it ? Not by argumentation. That was in the nature of things impossible. The highest, as Goethe said, cannot be spoken. It can only be seen and realised and done. The artist sees it, and he tells us what he has seen in what he makes. The artist in living sees it, and he tells us what he has seen by what he is. And Jesus in His life, and supremely by the final gesture of His death, revealed to the world the God He knew. God the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Gospel which the Church proclaims for the redirection of human society. Jesus taught the world the great word Father. He gave us the right to become the sons of God. And the preaching of the first Christian missionaries, which claimed to have a cosmic significance, to hold the clue to the meaning of life, the preaching that made this tremendous claim took to the world no speculation at all and hardly any interpretation. It was simply concerned with the bare, naked facts that Jesus had been crucified and rose again. You can see from the old Baptismal Creed that the faith into which the converts were baptised

was simply a recital of fact : He was born of the Virgin Mary, crucified, dead and buried, and He rose again. That is the ground on which it bases its majestic opening sentence—I believe in God the Father and that He is the Maker of Heaven and earth. God the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ—that is the burden of the New Testament. That life and death, that mind and spirit, had made the great vision of God come alive in the world again. It had given men what they most desperately needed to know : it brought the world in all its bewilderment the conviction it so desperately needed, for lack of which it was paralysed and dying, that behind the vast processes of life there is a personal Love that cares for men, and that because all men are made for God, therefore they are made for one another.

And when this strange other-worldly Gospel, which was concerned apparently with nothing but an exclusively " religious " interest, went out into the Hellenistic world, it became at once the creative nucleus of a new form of civilisation. Christianity went out into a world in which all the precious things in life were going bad, in which all men's best achievements were turning into disillusionment, and all their energies were being paralysed through the sheer lack of a God to worship. And this strange other-worldly Gospel of a crucified Messiah, Who had shown men God, goes out into this Hellenistic world, and at once proves itself creative in the building up of new ways of life. The magnificent outreach after fulness of life which had been the glory of the Hellenic

world had ended in disappointment and futility. All its values were becoming tarnished, all its best achievements turning sour, and the spirit of man, reaching towards Divinity, found itself defeated and alone. And when the good news of the Gospel came to it, it was as though the sun shone once more and the flowers all sprang to life again. The discovery of the one pearl of great price made all pearls more lovely and more precious. It quickened, cleansed and redirected all men's thought and aim and effort along the lines of spiritual venture. It awakened new intellectual alertness, new delicacy of æsthetic sensitiveness ; it educated a new social conscience which expressed and verified itself in all those economic experiments which are recorded in early Christian history. It gave the world back a sense of direction : it called it to a glad consecration to the Purpose which rules at the heart of life. It called into being a new form of society. But the Gospel itself was none of these things. It does not offer new scientific attitudes, new canons of art, nor even a new morality. There is no such thing, I think, as a Christian ethic. What it brings is indeed a sword-thrust into the very heart of life, revealing new possibilities, new meanings at the innermost of life itself. The fact is you cannot trust life, as all human history makes clear, unless and until you can see behind it God, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. That is what the Gospel took to men. It showed them what was at the centre : Reality came by Jesus Christ. It called men thus to glad consecration as sons of God in the spirit of Christ Jesus, their lives

grounded in the Divine Purpose which is enthroned at the heart of Life. Within that purpose they knew they were safe: in a world so ruled they could be at home. For the vision of God verified in Christ gives mankind the courage to believe that the power which dwells in the pulses of cosmic energy is the God we know in our secret hearts in our best and richest intuitions—the spirit we know at our own highest moments—the Holy Spirit who comes to us through Jesus. It is thus that Bethlehem makes the world a home.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD. THE GROUNDS FOR THE CHRISTIAN ASSUMPTION

The Rev. C. E. Raven, D.D.,
Canon of Liverpool, Chaplain to the King

THE PURPOSE OF GOD. THE GROUNDS FOR THE CHRISTIAN ASSUMPTION

If the claims that Christians make for Jesus are valid, it is clear that they involve certain assumptions as to the nature and purpose of the Universe. Jesus is far too significant to be neglected by the scientist, the historian or the philosopher. And for us, if our religion is not to be a mere superstition, it must be related to an integrated scheme covering our whole experience. A Universe that can contain Jesus, an evolutionary process into which He comes, cannot be regarded as if He were not here. Rather we must interpret it in the light of what He reveals about God, of what He is.

And for this we have warrant from Jesus Himself. He was concerned primarily with God : He went to the heart of life ; but He did so because only in relation to God can we make sense of the world, because only if we go deep can we organise our whole æsthetic, intellectual and moral activities rightly. He lived in God : but He lived fully, perfectly. All our conduct and relationships must express and be consistent with our religion. " By their fruits ye shall know them " : " Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord " : " Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my

brethren" : such sayings warn us against exaggerating the other-worldliness of the Gospel.

If in this matter I differ from Mr. Barry, I differ also from him when he claims that the message of the Early Church was the Apostles' Creed. It was the lives of Christians, their beauty, their sincerity, their love, that won the world. St. Paul, St. John, indeed the whole New Testament and the bulk of Patristic literature prove how eagerly they sought to explore and explain the consequences of their faith.

St. Paul, when he called Christ "God's mystery," claimed that here, in Jesus, was an answer to the riddle of the Universe : when he condemned the Gentile world for ignoring the witness of creation, he implied that what Jesus had revealed was not, in fact, anything radically different from the testimony of the natural order ; when he spoke of all creation as travailing together and awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God, he sanctioned the view that the whole evolutionary process is planned for the attainment of its culmination in Jesus. Strong as is his sense of sin and of the uniqueness of Christ, there is for him no radical disparity between the Universe and the Redeemer. Creation, Redemption, Inspiration, are but different phases of a single coherent whole : they reveal the same values and manifest the same God. Acceptance of Jesus meant acceptance of a distinctively Christian philosophy.

Until seventy years ago such a philosophy was taken for granted. It was indeed based upon Jewish and unscientific ideas of creation : it was

still influenced by geocentric notions of a three-storeyed Universe : it ascribed to God a character not wholly consistent with that of Christ—a character derivable rather from Moses or Aristotle than from Jesus. But it served as a sufficient background for a scheme of salvation. Those who still cling to it would do well to remember that the revolt against it has not come solely from the representatives of modern science, but also from those Christians who realise how deeply it misrepresented the God whom Jesus bade us call " our Father."

But it is our new knowledge of the Universe that is mainly responsible for our present perplexities. It was easy in the old days to reconcile, in some sort, belief in an Incarnation with the small and friendly world in which God's benevolent providence, or God's righteous wrath, could be alternately employed to explain the incidence of fortune. Men did not then measure space by light-years, nor search for the origin of life among the filtrable viruses ; nor did they realise the great part that struggle and death had taken in the process of evolution, and the presence in it of cruelty and lust : nor need they accept the evidence of man's animal ancestry and animal instincts : nor had they any temptation to dispute the transcendence of the Godhead. For us every department of human knowledge has been revolutionised : biology, psychology and philosophy have made havoc of traditional orthodoxy ; we can no longer start our theology with certain general principles and select our data to illustrate

them ; and when we look at the facts they seem to many of us flatly irreconcilable with the religion of Jesus.

Yet if our Christianity is to be more than a pious sentiment, we must have the courage to demand and to seek a Christian interpretation of the natural order. We cannot keep our science and our faith in different compartments : we cannot confine the revelation of Jesus to a field less than the whole of our experience : we must make sense of the Universe, refusing all easy dualisms and the blasphemy which says *credo quia incredibile*. Else Jesus is not Way and Truth and Life : else it is folly to call Him Son of God. To formulate a Christian philosophy, to baptise the new knowledge into Christ—that is the supreme task of your generation. We older people can give you little more than certain warnings and a hope.

As to warnings : first I would say, do not let yourselves be distressed by the size and age of the Universe. Its immensity and longevity do not of themselves affect its character or meaning. If we have moved into a larger house, that does not of itself alter the quality of our family life. If we are no longer naïvely self-styled Lords of Creation, we are yet men, with man's life to live and man's experience of worship and of the eternal to inspire us.

Secondly, you will not, I think, solve the problems of suffering or of evil by reviving the mythology of Paradise Lost. Speculations as to a pre-mundane Fall are just plausible guess-work, scientifically valueless, and in fact more calculated

to obscure the issue than to illuminate it. The key to a solution does not lie with a belief in Satan ; for if Satan be God's equal, then God is not master in His own house ; if he be a rebel, then God allows his rebellion. There must be a purpose in suffering and in evil, and that purpose must fall within the sphere of the divine activity. Ultimately God is responsible for a Universe in which evil has come into existence ; for myself, I believe that God can accomplish by permitting the possibility of evil what He could not achieve at any lesser cost.

Thirdly, you cannot concentrate as some would have us do upon man and man's destiny, and treat creation as merely the background or the irrelevant prologue of the human drama. Those who do so are still obsessed by the doctrine of special creations ; they are not thorough-going evolutionists. On the biological side, comparative methods of study have won their way to acceptance ; but in psychology there is still a great neglect of evolutionary study. The easy animism which regards mind and body as standing to one another as the musician does to his instrument is due to ignorance of comparative psychology. You must strive to see creation as a whole, " to grasp this sorry scheme of things entire," if you would form a thoroughly Christian explanation of it.

Fourthly, overwhelmed as we all must often be by the suffering and evil of the world, remember that sensibility is almost the fundamental quality both of life and love, that without suffering there would be no sympathy, without pain no discipline

or compassion, without struggle no progress, without evil no forgiveness and, I think, no virtue. Those whose hearts are stricken with the tragedy of life are almost always those who have not themselves suffered. We who have known suffering have learnt to see that without it love would be meaningless and life insipid : we count the cost, and are content to pay it.

Fifthly, do not forget that the prospect of a synthetic and Christian philosophy is far brighter than it has been. Materialism has succumbed to a converging assault from many quarters. The rigid determinism of the biology of Weismann and Mendel has been abandoned. The behaviourism of Dr. Watson and his pupils has not commended itself as convincing. The most striking feature of thought is the revival of theism, the readiness of scientists to look for a spiritual interpretation of reality.

And so to our hope. Looking far back into the origin and composition of the physical Universe we see that under the influence of the two forces of attraction and repulsion its whole structure has been built. Attraction is the germ from which is evolved co-operation and fellowship : repulsion, that from which come individuation, selfhood, freedom. Fellowship and freedom—these two are the constituents of love : love is the influence, the motive, and the end of the whole process. By the interplay of these forces, proton and electron coming together and yet remaining separate constitute the atom. A fellowship of atoms causes the emergence of the molecule. From molecules

duly ordered under appropriate conditions emerge solids and the whole inorganic order. Similarly, as I believe, from inorganic stuff under special conditions and in due proportion life appears. The development of life follows a triple rhythm. At first the influence of attraction is supreme: the unicellular gives rise to the multicellular, and organisms develop communities like the colonies of coral polyps, the nests of termites and the hives of bees. At the insect level a very complete fellowship is achieved; but the individual counts for almost nothing. The next phase marks the progress of individuation until, with the higher vertebrates, selfhood is won—at the expense of competition and a weakened communal sense. With man, the third or synthetic phase is reached. Each of us, as child and adolescent, recapitulates the two earlier phases. As adults having gained self, we are to bring it to fulfilment by a voluntary losing of it in love, achieving our perfection as individuals by entering into the fulness of fellowship with God and our brethren.

Or look at it from a different angle. With the appearance of life comes a measure of alternate response. We may gibe at the free-will of an amœba, but the amœba differs from the blob of colloid precisely because its reactions are not purely mechanical. To some small extent it chooses, and by its choice decides the future. By trial and error, by elimination and success, gradually it gains a richer environment and powers more complex. Simple behaviour develops into dimly purposive conduct; and this, in turn, as

sensibility increases leads on to deliberate purpose. And so mind emerges and from mind a glimmering of self-consciousness and of a perception of moral standards. So at last we reach the level of spiritual experience, of mysticism, of worship, of man's supreme and hard-bought achievement.

Time does not permit me to elaborate the scheme in detail or to do more than refer to two confirmatory points.

Psychology is beginning to outline for us a view of human nature which gives the primacy to love. That is what Dr. Freud, when he frees himself from his obsession with sex, is striving after for the individual. And recent studies of the group mind lay stress on comradeship as the basal element in human relationships.

Secondly, and for those of you who are not trained scientists, look at nature as a whole, nature with her liver-fluke and tiger as well as her lilies and her doves. Surely the first impression that she makes is one of superb artistry. Then she arouses your curiosity, trains your mind, and sets you to school. Finally, when you have entered into her life of suffering and joy, I think you will come to feel that the Universe is indeed a home, a place meet for the family of the children of God.

The best account that I know of our Christian assumptions is still that which, ninety years ago, Robert Browning put into the mouth of his disillusionised charlatan, Paracelsus. After confessing the failure of his ambitions and surveying the scheme of creation, he concludes with the acknowledgment :

> In my own heart love had not been made wise
> To trace love's first beginnings in mankind,
> To know even hate is but a mask of love's,
> To see a good in evil, and a hope
> In ill-success, to sympathise, be proud
> Of man's half-reasons, faint aspirings, dim
> Struggles for truth.

And as we learn to see the whole evolutionary process as a single consistent movement, expressing love's eternal purpose, aspiring ever towards love's fulfilment in conscious fellowship with God, we shall repent of our criticisms, join hands with one another, and take up together the age-old quest in which we are now the pioneers, the quest along the Way of the Cross to the attainment of that which Jesus revealed.

THE CONFLICT IN THE SOUL OF MAN

The Rev. W. Russell Maltby, D.D.,
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THE CONFLICT IN THE SOUL OF MAN

The conviction underlying the addresses to which we have listened in this conference is that there is a meaning in the universe and Some One who means it—that there is a Christian view of the world which is hospitable to all the known facts and is indeed their true interpretation—in a word, that there is a purpose of God in the life of the world.

Such a conviction, as we all know, is peremptorily challenged in our day on many sides, and cannot be reasonably maintained without a reckoning with the facts which are disclosed by a century of research, and display to us a vastly different universe from that which our fathers knew. Those unthinkable tracts of space and periods of time with which the sciences confront and startle us seem sometimes to argue nothing so clearly as our own total insignificance. And human life itself, where a divine purpose might be expected to be seen most convincingly, appears, especially under modern conditions, to be ruled by vast impersonal processes which take no account of those spiritual values for which, on the Christian view, the whole exists. It will be a great thing if we can help one another to look deeper and to see amongst all confusions and denials a real and

steadfast purpose of God, worthy of our utter trust.

There are those, of course, who would view these wide excursions into remote realms of knowledge, and these attempts to philosophise the universe, with misgiving as an unnecessary sophistication of the simplicity of religion. The warning may not be without its use, but the answer is that in the end we have no option. Every new fact, wheresoever discovered, comes home at last to our religion, and cries "Make room for me." If we do not make room for it, it will haunt our religion till it becomes uninhabitable. Not that we are all equal to the more adventurous journeys which better minds must take. Many of us can only look on from afar while Canon Raven marries a proton to an electron, or sadly contemplates the first backsliding amœba committing its first sin. But it is a very great thing for those of us whose range is more limited, that men better furnished than ourselves, who have been obliged to rebuild their mental home again and again, still find Christ to be the one foundation on which to build—the one Light of all their world. They bring us fresh and kindling confirmation of what we ourselves have seen, that the very facts which came in to threaten our faith, being confronted with Him, become subject, and yield their tribute of nobler thoughts of God.

But we should make sure that we are not raising cosmic problems as a distraction from dealing with our own. We are ourselves a part of the moral disorder of the universe. We come back from a

study of the need and trouble of the world in a graver mood, because we see our own faulty lives in a great context. No one has anything sincere to say about the remedy for the world's problems unless he has faced his own. We need to understand the nature of this strange inward conflict in which each one of us is involved ; we need to be reconciled to the cost of it, and above all we need to see how swiftly God would lead us to the point Mr. Macmurray spoke of, where we cease to think of cost, where service passes into freedom, and true life begins.

We have been reminded of the choice which Jesus made. Turn back and look at it once more. The whole of His ministry was the working out a life-choice made in the solitude of the desert at the beginning. He came to win men, but He refused to *buy* them, even with bread. He refused to *coerce* them, even with their own weapons. He refused to *overawe* them, even at their own request. He left hunger in the world, and oppression, and doubt, though He armed all His followers against them. But He never imagined that God had overlooked these things or that they were mere gratuitous and fortuitous intrusions. The successive moments of His choice were each a deep consent to the patient ways of God, and a reverent resolve to leave the bounds of human freedom where God had put them, with all the consequences involved. He knew that we cannot have goodness unless the alternative is left open, and that we cannot love God unless we have the chance of forgetting Him. We cannot be religious

unless we have the chance of being irreligious. We cannot live as children in our Father's house, merely because there is nowhere else to go. There must be the opportunity of the far country—though, remember, you can make a far country of your own doorstep. And we cannot learn to live as members of one family unless we have the power to hurt as well as to help one another.

All this seems obvious enough, but the implications are far-reaching and not always obvious. With a better and a worse always before us, it would seem to be of necessity that the nobler alternative should have some element of cost. See how the virtue fades out of any fine action as soon as we see that obvious self-interest ran parallel all the way. If honesty were always the best policy, we should never have known what honesty was. If goodness always " paid," we should never have needed the word " goodness." If courage always came out with a whole skin, and a man knew that if he risked himself in a good cause, there would be no real risk, because God would see to it that He took no harm—there would be no men of courage. If truth always came at the first asking, there would be no search for truth, and no valuing of it when it was found.

Concede, then, that prizes for the good must not be too obviously advertised, some will still be wondering whether it would not be well if the penalties for wrong-doing were more punctually administered ? " The Lord loveth the righteous . . . but *the way of the wicked He turneth upside*

down." Perhaps He does, but not very systematically—the righteous have always complained. I remember when some ungodly undergraduates left a meeting in an inappropriate manner. The Missioner prayed that God would give them no rest until they repented of their sins. This prayer, however, was not answered. Probably they slept better than the evangelist. Yet such prayers were often uttered in great sincerity by earnest men who found it hard to understand why God made life so tolerable for sinners, when by a short course of misery He might drive them home. Certainly if it were understood that the disobedient would suffer insomnia on week-nights and colic on Sundays, we should all be scrupulously in Church—or in Asylums. But whether in one place or the other, we should not be worshipping, for we should be incapable of a free man's worship.

This, you may say, is caricature ; yet if people would follow their ordinary thoughts of God and His ways to their necessary conclusion, many would find themselves brought to some such absurdity as this, and then turning back, they would find no real stopping-place till they come back to God's ways in the world as it is—a world more immeasurable than we had ever dreamed, but infinitely richer and not wholly unintelligible. It is really possible to see why there are no short-cuts to a world morally perfect ; how, in a world of freedom, order must be won out of disorder ; why goodness is left apparently defenceless and those who serve God are promised no immunities ; why we must rise to our spiritual manhood always

against the gravitation of a lower nature ; in a word, why there is a strait gate.

The strait gate ! Is that a figure for *a difficult beginning ?* There are two phrases of Jesus which, if they could be reconciled in our minds, would take us near to the heart of the Christian life. The strait gate and the easy yoke ! It does seem as if Jesus said that the beginning was difficult ; the way easy. It is one of the most significant features of the Christian religion that it gathers up all the multitudinous choices which life presents, each with its own demand and focuses them into one great choice, which being honoured and held to, carries all the rest in the end, and carries them high. But we get astray if we think of that choice as a sort of heroic decision—for humility will help us more than heroics here. It is not resolute and tight-lipped denial of self. The choice, however deep and solemn, is in the nature of a free response to a known Person, an abandonment of ourselves to a Friend whose Friendship was presupposed in the powers given and the task imposed in the whole scene of life in which we are cast.

The drift of Christ's teaching encourages us, as the Church's teaching and practice scarcely do, to look for a great and splendid entrance upon a new Fellowship, freely offered to us. He warns us in a score of ways against the attempt to take up the Christian life piecemeal and by instalments. The relation between ourselves and God is an all-or-nothing affair, and it cannot be anything else with a religion which has the Cross of Christ as its luminous centre. We can carry on with a second-

hand religion for a time—though not for very long with real honesty—but when at last we are confronted with the God whose love and holiness are one, there is nothing for it but a surrender of our poor selves, and this perhaps can never be easy. We must find ourselves before we can give ourselves ; we must taste life before we can dedicate it, but when we have found it and tasted it, it seems worth keeping for ourselves. It is a strait gate. But if it be God who is dealing with us, there comes a time, sometimes a moment of time, when the difficulty is no longer evaded but accepted, and changed in the instant of its acceptance—the strait gate becomes the easy yoke, and His service becomes perfect freedom.

The validity of all this depends on the answer to one question, Is God able to make Himself real to us ? It is a question that we ought to face quite frankly. It is in vain to try to borrow a little religious warmth from the notion of friendship with God, if in the end we can get no further than regard God as an intellectual probability. You cannot make friends with a spectre. The affirmation of the Christian Gospel is that God became incarnate in order to put Himself within the range of our apprehension and make such a thing as friendship possible between us. Even if we could see in Jesus nothing more than a great Master of the religious life, we should still be obliged to say that His teaching was misleading, unless this kind of sacred intimacy with God was intended to be ours. His great subject is God, and His name for God is Father. He does not speak of Fatherhood.

Abstractions of that kind He leaves to us. "Which of you being a father, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?" And when we answer within ourselves, "No, thank God, bad as I am, I am not as bad as that," Jesus goes on, "If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give good gifts to them that ask Him!" The utter simplicity and reality of words like these—and there are many parallels—may miss us six times, and find us the seventh, but when they find us they show us a world of reality in which our customary unbelief is strange, unnatural, perverse; and an intimate trust in God the emancipation of our souls.

If this be so, why is it so hard for many people to find God? We might say that the Church itself is bearing a rather hesitating witness. It would be possible to go to many a Church for quite a long time and never imagine that one was being invited to share a very great experience. But I question whether we get much help along that line. Our fathers would have taught us to look for the fault in ourselves and would have offered us an explanation in the formidable theory of original sin. I believe there are two or three people still alive who believe they understand that great mystery. The doctrine had at any rate the merit of recognising the universality of the problem. It took it up boldly, and laid it down again in a different place. And that was something, for theologians and policemen believe that problems and crowds are never dangerous if you can keep them moving.

But the doctrine had another merit, that it taught every man to suspect himself before he suspected God or arraigned the universe. This is still good counsel. We imagine ourselves to be sincerely inquiring spirits searching for truth and God, with God always disappearing round the corner. But this is flattering ourselves. Does any one of us come to the search for God without any interior treachery, without secret gainsayings, unconscious insincerities, unwillingnesses which lie concealed as long as we are only inquiring, but wake up with their veto when we are ready to find. It is a far more hopeful thing to believe that there is something wrong with our eyes, than to think that the sun has fallen out of the heavens or that there is no colour in the sky. For the true Light still shines.

THE COMMUNITY OF THE LOYAL

The Rev. F. R. Barry, M.A.,
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THE COMMUNITY OF THE LOYAL

We have been trying all through this Conference to study God's purpose for His world in order that we may offer to it our loyalty. We have agreed to find it in Christ Jesus. That, we are told, is anthropocentric: how, we are asked, can Man, the latest comer on this exceedingly insignificant planet, claim to know the secrets of the Universe or to be the centre of a cosmic scheme? I suppose the answer is that he does not—at any rate, not at the bidding of Christianity. All that the Gospel offers to declare to us is God as He is revealed among Mankind. What other God can we hope to know? There is much about God that we can never know. The ultimate depths of the Divine Being can never be disclosed to finite minds. There is that in God which is not revealed in Christ; and even for Christians it remains true that "His ways are not as our ways nor His thoughts as our thoughts." It is indeed this very ignorance which invests the little life of men with its grand penumbra of mysteriousness. *Omnia exeunt in mysterium.* All that the Gospel claims to bring the world is the light that shines at the centre, illuminating all the vast abysses of our unimaginable Universe—a light shining in the darkness, as the guarded language of the New Testament is so scrupulous in saying. We

cannot know the purpose of God in detail. What may be the will of God for Mars I have not the very smallest conception. Or for the amœba or the liver-fluke, to which so much theological speculation has been dedicated recently. (I am not quite sure what an amœba is.) But we *can* know the will of God for us ; and that would seem to be rather more important. For " in order to be religion must do."

Yet, after all, the process is continuous. Life comes to consciousness in mind and mind to self-consciousness in Man. If we descry the signs of purpose *anywhere*, we must concede it over the whole field. If we may fairly say that history is the real " meaning " of biology, then—since Man is organically related to the immemorial processes of life—they, too, are in some way committed to the will of God made known to us in Jesus. " The earnest expectation of creation waits for the revelation of the sons of God." Thus the fact we call the Incarnation throws its light both forwards and backwards—back into the past that has led up to it, forward into the future it makes possible. That is the point of view of the New Testament. If God has entered into human history then history has divine significance—history and all that precedes it. We are not mere biological by-products washed up on the tidal beaches of evolution. Man is the bearer of a divine purpose, focussed and personalised in Jesus. In Him the " mystery " of God is shown to us—God's eternal purpose for our race as Man steps out from his biological background, and sets his face towards his divine des-

tiny. In Him begins a new divine era in which God's will for the world may be verified in the organisation of a new humanity, "consummating all things in Christ." Of that purpose the Church is the Prophet and the chief (but not the only) Instrument. There are two questions then to be considered. (1) How did men come by that superb belief and what is its evidence for us to-day? (2) What does it involve in life and action if we are to respond to it loyally?

Jesus believed Himself to be Messiah—the converging point of all the lines of history and the Inaugurator of the New Age. That belief and the forms in which it shaped itself were conditioned —as all the books point out—by the Jewish environment of His time and place. Messiahship means little to us in the West. Inside the New Testament it is superseded. And frantic attempts are made to eliminate the so-called apocalyptic sayings by which that faith expressed itself in words. In the "liberal" books they hardly appear at all. But that is too easy a solution. The really important point to grasp is this: make as much allowance as you like for misunderstanding and misinterpretation on the part of His first hearers and reporters, and the limitations of His own knowledge: yet for Him, at that time and place, in the circumstances in which He found Himself, it was the inevitably right expression—inevitable as a great work of art—of the claims which He made upon the future. It was only, He said, on the other side of death that His significance could be fully realised. It was expedient that He should go

away. Here He was a failure and a fugitive. Here defeat and death were His portion. Nevertheless the Son of Man would come, through death and out on the further side of it, Messiah vindicated and invincible. In His last utterance before the end, waiting for sentence to be passed upon Him, He said that the New Age *had* now begun: "From this time onwards there shall be the Son of Man . . . coming on the clouds of heaven."

He came: and His Spirit poured into men's hearts made personal religion credible. It renewed the inner springs of life. It enabled men to say Abba, Father. Thus it blossomed into a new society, building itself up in love creatively along all the lines of spiritual effort. It verified itself at the heart of life. Men and women found themselves caught into a creative experience, which lifted them above their limitations, delivered them from selfishness and fear, inspiring life with a new directive energy, re-empowering all their moral effort, and drawing them into such intimacy of fellowship as the world had never known before. Across all the gulfs that divide men, racial, economic and sectarian, they were gathered into the new community, one in the Spirit of Jesus that possessed them. If so, then He was more than Messiah. The widening of Christian experience broke the earlier intellectual categories. They must find new ways of expressing His significance. The successive attempts to explain Who Jesus *is* grew out of the discovery of what He *does*. The heightened attributes with which they clothed Him are the expression of the widen-

ing area within which His Spirit is verified in action. The one is but the attempt to explain the other. The two things are really inseparable. Remember that "the divinity of Christ" is no mere formula of pedantic orthodoxy, no tiresome insistence of clerical antiquarians. *It is the charter of Christian Universalism.* God—none less—was in Christ reconciling. Can anything less than Universal Spirit transcend our obstinate, partial group loyalties and organise a new human family? For that was indeed what was being done; and that—according to the Christian faith—is the purpose at the heart of life—to create a new fellowship of persons, living the life of sons and daughters of God (with all that this vocation carries with it) in a family ruled and informed by the Christ-Spirit. In it there can be neither French nor German, Japanese or American, African or English, white or coloured, dispossessed or privileged.

The Society which the Spirit of Christ made is thus the focus of a new humanity, God's New Man, as St. Paul once put it, or (as we say) the Christ-that-is-to-be. That is the communion of saints—the community of dedicated people—in which we often say we believe. Oddly enough, I really do believe in it—sufficiently at least to give my life (for whatever it may be worth) to trying to help it come true on earth. And after all it *is* coming true. Here are you, for example, drawn together out of every nation and people and kindred and tongue, in what is for many of you a foreign land, sharing a common hope and common

friendship. What is it that has brought you here ? It is not, I hope, blasphemy to suggest that it is a power greater even than Annandale. I am trespassing here on the Archbishop's speech, but perhaps I may be allowed to say just this. Remember it is no perfect Church in heaven, no ideal construction of men's dreams, but this actual thing, these actual institutions with all their sins, negligences and ignorances, which have kept alive the faith of our Saviour Christ, have given the world whatever light it has, and are even now working in men's consciences with a passion for peace and justice still unrealised.

For that community we ask your loyalty. For at present it is not nearly good enough. I shudder to think of Africans and Indians prowling round the back streets of Liverpool and saying : " This is what a thousand years of Christianity has done for them ! " Really it is not nearly good enough. And I want to come down with all the weight I can on the *ethical* implications of Church membership. That is the centre of everything at present. The controversies which agitate the Churches—questions of ceremonial, questions of organisation, petitions for and against the new Prayer Book—they are away out on the circumference. Relatively they do not matter at all. Whilst the champions of obsolete allegiances are skirmishing over long-forsaken battlefields, the centre of the Christian line is breaking. The moral questions are the urgent questions.

I ventured to say in my first address that there is no such thing as a Christian Ethic, and now,

you say, I am making a speech about it! But there is not any real inconsistency. I stick to it that the Gospel as first preached was other-worldy in its emphasis. It was not a new programme for Society. It was all concerned with rebirth and forgiveness and the redemptive love of God the Father. About the achievements of classical civilisation it has little to say but scorn and condemnation. Its *primary* interest was not in this world. But the moment it entered into history it began at once to rebuild civilisation, to verify itself in concrete living, redirecting all the activities in which the thoughts and wills of men are spent—economic, intellectual, æsthetic—remaking the pattern of personal relationships. For if at the centre of the Universe there is God the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, if Love is indeed *the* reality, then that—if we take it seriously—means the rebirth of all our attitudes: it involves the redemption of men's loyalties and the transfiguration of their values. So Our Lord had said: it means *repentance* if we want to enter into His Kingdom—repentance not in the rather dingy meaning which our conventionality has imposed upon it, but in the brave sense of the New Testament—learning to see things from God's point of view. *Metanoia* is a word of the *mind*. Nobody who is himself the centre of his own horizon can truthfully say Our Father. He must be reborn into a new outlook.

Let me try to suggest the kind of thing it means if God is the God we know in Jesus. It involves, to begin with, a rebirth into a new attitude towards

Nature—a trustful, reverent and creative attitude. Let me take the simplest illustration. Englishmen are lovers of gardens. We say—it is our natural reaction—"God not in gardens? but I have a sign: 'Tis very sure God walks in mine." We owe that to Christianity. In Seneca's garden stood Priapus. The fact is you *cannot* "trust nature" till you can find God the Father in it. Only because of the God we find in Jesus do we dare to say that the creative impulse is a manifestation of God's Holy Spirit. This changed outlook on the natural order leads to new approaches in Natural Science and in the end to a different kind of Art. There is not time to work this out at all. But there is obviously a real difference between art that is characteristically Christian and that which springs from other forms of culture. Take the New Testament itself as an achievement of creative genius, contrast it with the exhausted euphuism of contemporary pagan literature: and you will begin to understand the difference. Christianity was the first to make a vernacular the medium of a great literature.

But we are concerned now primarily with ethics. Here it means the revaluation of all the worth-while ends and aims of life: as that knowledge, beauty, economic betterment, are only good so far as they are *shared* and made the instrument of spirit-life. For the heart of the whole matter is this: the Gospel involves that personal relationships are more precious than anything else on earth—beyond knowledge, beyond beauty even. This is the real differentia between the Christian

scheme of life and paganism. Mr. Clive Bell, in his book *Civilisation*, has given us a brilliant statement of what may be called the Hellenic ideal; and there is hardly a sentence there that does not make a Christian shudder. This, then, is the primary differentia, that personal relationships are more important than anything else because Love rules at the centre of the Universe. This carries with it a social revolution that we have hardly yet begun to contemplate. Thus the meekness and gentleness of Christ has often become the volcanic force behind the implacable demand for liberty, putting to flight old tyranny and wrong. It spells a new reading of social justice just because it gives a new answer to the crucial question, Who is my neighbour? Christianity is the only faith that is genuinely intolerant of privilege. "He died for all that henceforth those that live should live not unto themselves." As the author of *Piers Plowman* said:

> Blood brethren we became there
> And gentlemen, each one.

It carries with it new ideals of character. Contrast the picture in 1 Cor. xiii with the rather self-centred prigs held up to admiration by Stoicism, or the crude strength of the "public school spirit." If our attitudes are redeemed by Christ, then shall we see that the demands of Justice are only satisfied in unquestioning love: and that courage—the very basis of all character—has to be transfigured into that love that believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things

in the evocation and fostering of *life*. That is the courage the New Age demands. Again—and perhaps the most important thing in the present condition of the world—it means the redirection of group loyalties, lifting our thoughts and feelings out of the prison-house of our fragmentary, group-centred classifications into a realm in which all the children of God matter to Him quite as much as we do. It revalues all our political currency.

I can only throw out these few suggestions. What they imply in the actual conduct of policy, in the framing of social remedies and programmes, in dispelling the nightmare of armaments and all the other tasks that await us, we have got to try and work out for ourselves by the slow experiments of trial and error. That is part of our Christian education. There is no one infallible prescription. There is no formula that covers it. I cannot give it you in a bag—like a bun or an S.C.M. publication—to take back with you to your colleges. Beware of nebulous and flamboyant assertions, such as we all make far too glibly, that if only people believe in Christianity the pains of the world will vanish in a night. I doubt if we shall get the world straight before the beginning of the Summer Term !

Nevertheless, there are gathered here representatives of your generation from nearly all countries of the earth. The control of the world is passing into your hands. You are here to dedicate your generation to give itself to God's will for His world. May I then say this before you go ? Remember that the more complex life becomes,

the more searching is the demand it makes on character. The greater the claim which life makes on character, the more urgent the need for personal religion. The individual disciple's loyalty is the only foundation for the Christian structure. The Church has a Gospel for the world, but only the lives of Christians with which to proclaim it. Prayer is the core of religion : and if private prayer and public worship go, then the whole Christian cause is smashed. Cannot you help us to do something with it ? Resolve, then, to verify your membership in the holy universal Church—the community of loyal men—in which " the powers of the coming age " (" the life of the world to come," as the Creed says) are already operative among mankind. " Be not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of your minds that you may prove what is the will of God, that good, acceptable and perfect thing."

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

I

God in the Re-making of China

Dr. T. Z. Koo,
General Secretary, Student Christian Movement of China

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

I

God in the Re-making of China

Four years ago, at Manchester, I stood before the Christian students of Great Britain and Ireland and said that " God, in His mysterious providence for the future of mankind, has taken China into the hollow of His hand and breathed upon her and said, ' Let there be Life.' " Little did I dream then that, four years later, I should be called upon again to speak on China before this Quadrennial Conference.

I have been back among my own people most of these four years. And what years have they been for us, years full of adventure and peril, years poignant with suffering and sombre with hopes deferred, years filled with anxiety and bewilderment only occasionally relieved by gleams of light presaging the dawn of better days. So much history has been crammed into these years that not four but forty years seemed to have elapsed between the China of 1925 and the China of 1929. I feel profoundly thankful to God that, after all the experience of these years, I can still stand before you with faith unbroken, with hope un-

dimmed, and with confidence unshaken to speak about God in the re-making of a nation in the Far East.

For the sake of clarity, I am going to divide my address into two main parts. In the first part, I shall deal with the national situation in general, and in the second part, with the Christian situation in particular. It will simplify matters for us considerably if we can visualise the situation in China as a picture with its background, foreground, and perspective.

Let me, first of all, paint for you the background of the Chinese picture. The main character of this background is one of upheaval and change in the whole life of the Chinese people. This change was brought about mainly by the intermingling of two cultures on our soil. A hoary, deep-flowing, and æsthetic East comes into contact with a young, vigorous and scientific West. This contact, which began just over a century ago, grew ever more extensive as the years went by, thereby causing in the life of our people great ferment and profound changes. To-day, we can trace, quite clearly, five broad currents of change in the political, intellectual, economic, social and moral aspects of the life of the Chinese people.

Politically, the Chinese people are changing from an absolute form of government, based upon the will of the emperor, to a democratic one, based upon the common will of the people. While this change is already begun, it will take us many years to reach the democratic goal. Just at the present moment the political evolution has reached the

stage when a new national consciousness is beginning to permeate the masses of China. To foster and educate this growing national consciousness is the next step in the political evolution.

Intellectually, the Chinese people are changing from an intellectual life based upon conservatism, and the blind and almost slavish worship of the authority of the Past to a new one based upon the scientific attitude of mind. In this intellectual change we have reached the point where the mind of China's youth has definitely broken with the past. But like a bird liberated after long being confined in its cage, our people hardly know where to turn in their new-found intellectual freedom. The immediate work before us on this score is to lay well the foundations of our new intellectual life which must rest on a forward-looking spirit, a desire for thoroughness and a love of truth for its own sake.

Economically, the Chinese people are leaving behind them their mediæval agricultural establishment and their system of small unit home-industries to enter the modern economic order of mass production in factories with machinery. This change is the most difficult one faced by the Chinese people, for with it their means of livelihood are involved. While the old economic order is crumbling down because no longer adequate, the new order is by no means fully established. We are just now in the interim period of adjustment with its attendant confusion and uncertainty made doubly difficult by the penetration of powerful foreign economic interests in China.

Socially, the Chinese people are changing in

two important respects, namely, in their family organisation and in the relationship between the sexes. The old family organisation is the clan system. Now this is being discarded in favour of the individual family organisation. This means that the children, when they are old enough to marry, no longer make their homes with their parents but go off and establish a new home of their own. This change is a fundamental one and will profoundly affect the family life of the Chinese people.

Then, in the relationship of the sexes, also a drastic change is taking place. The old social practice in this respect prescribes a rigid barrier in the social intercourse between men and women. In the good old days, therefore, a young man very often saw his bride for the first time only after marriage. There is an important ceremony called " Lifting the veil " in the old marriage custom of China. After the marriage vows are solemnly pronounced before heaven and earth, the groom and the bride are conducted into the bridal chamber and there he lifts the veil from the face of the bride and takes his first look at her. You can well imagine what a crucial moment that is, for that first look is often decisive in the making or marring of their future married life.

But all this is now changed. The barrier has been swept away and to-day young men and women meet quite freely in social intercourse. This has not necessarily increased the number of happy marriages in China. The old way at least has the advantage of postponing the all-absorbing

discovery of each other until after marriage. The real significance of this change is that women in China are steadily coming into their own on a parity with men.

In the moral sphere the changes are more difficult to trace. Two observations, however, may be made with reasonable certainty. Firstly, the old standards of moral conduct are toppling down. Take the virtue of loyalty. In the old days the expression of loyalty is directed towards the person of the Emperor. But now the monarchy is gone. In the new order loyalty will still remain a virtue of the Chinese, but its concrete expression and embodiment will change. Secondly, the emphasis is passing from individual virtues to group virtues. The old ethics of China is concerned with the individual. Now, the group is more and more displacing the individual in Chinese ethical thinking.

These five broad currents of change form the background of the Chinese picture. They are the basic factors behind the march of events in China and a knowledge of them is the first essential in the understanding of God's purpose in the re-making of my people.

Now let us look at the foreground of the Chinese picture. The five currents just described go on as a continuous process of change in the life of the Chinese people. But sometimes one current and sometimes another would forge into prominence and spring into the foreground of the picture. Thus in 1911 the political current was uppermost and we had our revolution. In 1914 the intel-

lectual current became dominant and we hailed the birth of the Renaissance Movement. After 1920 the economic current came to the fore, and we saw the rise of the Labour Movement. In 1926 all the five currents swelled to flood-tide and became the much misunderstood and maligned Nationalist Movement of China.

For the past two years this Nationalist Movement has been trying to establish itself in the country by force of arms against the reactionaries who would like to see the already discredited old order continued indefinitely in China. In the summer of 1928, with the capture of Peking by Nationalist armies, the Movement emerged from the revolutionary stage to settle down as an ordered government. What you see in the foreground of the picture to-day is just this process of a revolutionary movement becoming the national government of China.

As it does so, four new tasks call for immediate attention. First of all, there is the task of completing by peaceful means what was begun by force of arms, namely, the political unification of the country. The establishment of the National Government in Nanking is the first and most important step in this process of unification. It will take this new government several years of patient and tactful manœuvring before its authority can be established in all the provinces which for the last sixteen years had virtually not recognised any central authority. Success or failure in this task of unification depends mainly upon whether or not a constitution can be evolved which will be

acceptable to all the provinces. The crucial problem in the evolution of such a constitution lies in the demarcation of the local and national spheres of sovereignty especially in matters of finance and military control. The two men who will have an important part to play in the solution of this problem are General Chiang Kai Shek, President of the Republic, and Marshal Feng Yu Hsiang, Minister of National Defence.

Next comes the task of undertaking the material reconstruction of the country. If the present peaceful trend in our national affairs continues, then China will soon enter upon a period of material reconstruction, the magnitude of which fairly staggers my imagination to think of. To electrify and mechanise a whole continent covering one-fifth of the earth's inhabited surface will surely tax the technical skill and financial resources of the whole world. The prelude to this period is already begun in the effort to systematise and unify the finances of the country, both local and national and in the employment of foreign technical skill. Mr. T. V. Soong, the Minister of Finance, Mr. Sun Fo, the Minister of Railways, and Mr. H. H. Kung, the Minister of Commerce and Industries, are names which will figure prominently in all schemes of material reconstruction.

The third task to be undertaken is the training of our people in the meaning and processes of democratic government. This will be done principally through the educational programme of the Government, supplemented by the efforts of voluntary organisations in the fields of mass

education, citizenship training, rural improvement, international understanding, women's rights, etc.

Lastly, there is the task of putting China's international relationships upon an equitable and reciprocal basis. This consists, mainly, in the removal of restrictions placed upon China's sovereignty by foreign powers. The general nature of these restrictions is twofold, namely, economic and political. Let me give you an example of each: The political restriction limits the exercise of China's full legal sovereignty. When I visit Great Britain I am subject to British laws. When one of you come to China, you are not amenable to Chinese laws. When China sends you a shipload of merchandise, you fix the amount of import duty we have to pay. When you send us a shipload of merchandise you also fix the amount of import duty you have to pay. Such procedure is what we have been denouncing in China as unequal treaties. Judging by the present trend of public opinion in most foreign countries, we may expect these unilateral treaties to be abolished before very long, thereby removing a standing grievance of the Chinese people.

But, even after all these unequal treaties are abolished, we have only touched one phase of this international tangle. Let me give you an illustration of what I mean. A little over a year ago, in Shanghai, I had to call at a British hotel for a friend. As I walked into the main lobby of the hotel I was suddenly grabbed from behind and

asked what business I had to come into the hotel by the main entrance. Did I not know that Chinamen can only come in by the side entrance ? Now, a relationship of that kind between two people is not covered by treaties. A change in the letter of treaties is insufficient when it is not accompanied by a change in the spirit of our daily contact towards each other. The business of changing the letter of the treaties is in the hands of governments, but that of changing the spirit is in the hands of simple folk, like you and me.

Now we come to the perspective of the Chinese picture. To help you to see this perspective I am going to borrow an analogy from the life of another people. If you still read the Old Testament you will be familiar with the story, in the Book of Exodus, of how Jehovah raised up Moses to take His chosen people out of Egypt, their land of bondage, to go to Canaan, their promised land. What has been happening in China all these years is almost an exact parallel of this episode. God is bidding us to leave our Egypt, the old China, to march towards our Canaan, the New China. But between Egypt and Canaan there were forty long years of wandering in the wilderness. And we, too, are now in this period of wandering in the wilderness, beset with difficulties from all sides, threatened by perils from within and without, often straying off into by-paths which lead nowhere. Again and again our forward march is slowed up by those who still long for the flesh-pots of Egypt. But, through it all, there is a company of tried

men and women who have heard and heeded the call of God, and who know that no return to the old China is now possible. These men and women are certain that God purposes to lead our people into the promised land, for He has taken them to the top of Mount Nebo and shown them a vision of the New China from afar. It is this vision, burning in their hearts, which makes them press ever onward, which will not allow them to rest until the promised land is reached.

This is the perspective of the Chinese picture. Viewed in this perspective, the five broad currents of change in the background and the four urgent tasks in the foreground fall into their proper places. For then we begin to see clearly that the five broad currents of change are but the highways in the wilderness over which God is leading us to our promised land, and the four immediate tasks but the particular stages reached on the way. And I believe this perspective, which gives a unity and meaning to the Chinese picture, is a true one, for in it we discern the purpose of God in the remaking of my country.

Now let me pass on to the Christian situation in China to-day. In this situation, the most noticeable phenomenon in the last decade is the gradual hardening of the fringe around Christianity. This is inevitable after the years of insidious propaganda and violent attacks directed against religion in general and Christianity in particular. An analysis of this hardening process reveals the following four antitheses struggling for mastery in the lives of men and women in China, and this

struggle is nowhere more devastating and keener than in the mind and heart of Chinese students.

The first antithesis is that between material development and spiritual growth. The tendency is to say that what is needed in China to-day is not spiritual growth, but material development only. Impressed by the wonderful material efficiency of the West, the verdict of our people seems to be all in favour of materialism.

The second antithesis is that between force and love as a principle of life. The tendency is to say that modern life is entirely based upon the practice of might is right and that it is a fatuity for us to be talking about Christian love. Just after the Japanese sent in an army to occupy Tsinan in Shantung last May, a Chinese student asked me this question : " What is our duty now ? To rise in arms and drive out the invader or to turn the other cheek, as it were, and invite them to seize another province ? " Force or Love ? And I am afraid the verdict of young China will be force. They cannot help it, for no nation in the world, in spite of 2,000 years of Christ, has yet dared to tread the way of the Cross in its national affairs, the way of life through seeming death, the way of conquest not by force but by love.

The third antithesis is that between rationalism and revealed religion. The " li " or reason has always been a dominant characteristic in the intellectual life of the Chinese people. That which cannot be comprehended by man's reason is held to be unworthy of consideration. Therefore, to our people the ethical teachings of

Christianity present little difficulty, while its claims as a revealed religion are brushed aside as superstitions.

The fourth and last antithesis is that between national service and religious work. There is a general tendency in the country to-day to exalt national service and belittle religious work. Shortly before I sailed for England, General Feng Yu Hsiang, through a mutual friend, sent me a message urging me to give more time to work for the nation and less time to Christian work. Now you must not rush to conclusions about General Feng merely from hearing this one little incident. I am merely illustrating with his message a growing tendency to consider men like us as wasting time in religious work when we are perhaps more needed in other lines of national service. I hope this antithesis is a passing one, but while it lasts it eats insidiously into the morale of Christian workers.

Next let us consider how the Christian Church has fared in such a situation. You are all aware of the stormy times we have had during the past two years as a Christian group. It was a period of material and spiritual suffering for many of us. Our churches were desecrated in many cities. A number of our schools were closed down. Missionaries and Chinese Christians were ridiculed and attacked. One result of this has been to winnow the chaff from the grain in our Christian communities. The lukewarm, the faint-hearted and the doubtful have fallen away from us. But, thank God, there were also those who came through the furnace purified and triumphant,

and who are facing the future with clearer vision, deeper insight, and greater courage than ever before. On this group the future of the Kingdom of God in China must rest, and God grant it be worthy of this opportunity and responsibility. A brief survey of some of the more marked effects of this period of suffering upon Chinese Christian groups will help us to understand a little more clearly the purpose of God in His dealings with us. At the same time, it will indicate to us where new life may be looked for.

First of all I wish to mention the spontaneous fellowship groups of Christian men and women which have sprung up in many parts of China during the last year or so. These groups are generally small, and often quite informal, without organisation of any kind. But the one characteristic common to them all is an earnest quest for reality along two lines : reality in our communion with God, and reality in our fellowship with each other. They want to capture in their own little groups something of the simplicity, directness and reality of the early Christian fellowship seen in the apostolic times. Through meditation, study, worship, service, and even play, they are seeking to get closer to God and to each other. New prayers, original hymns and forms of worship have come from these groups. What they will mean in the life of the Church it is as yet too early to say. But I feel confident, from my own contact with these fellowship groups, that they cannot fail to leave an imprint upon the expanding Christian life and thought in my country.

Secondly, the criticism and attack of the anti-religion movement has greatly stimulated Chinese Christians to do more thinking for themselves into the fundamental truths of Christianity. At the present moment, several lines of thought and study are being pursued. Some are interested in studying the revelation of God which Christ Himself has given us. Others are exploring the attitude and relationship of Jesus Himself to this God. Still others ask, "What does it mean to me to believe in God in the way Jesus taught us, in the social, national and international background of China?" Much of the intellectual effort is halting and amateurish, but it is the beginning of an apologetic and a theology which the Chinese Church will some day be proud to call its own.

Thirdly, the general dislocation of Christian work last year has greatly increased the sense of responsibility on the part of Chinese Christians. When one has had to suffer for some cause, that cause becomes doubly precious, and peculiarly one's own. So it was with many Chinese Christian groups. They have emerged from their difficulties with a new sense of dignity, power and responsibility. To a rising Church this is an inestimable asset.

Lastly, the persecutions of their enemies have greatly accentuated and accelerated the movement towards a United Church of Christ in China. The yearning to be one, freed from all denominational differences, has always been strong in the heart of the Chinese Christian. Last year this yearning received more concrete expression than in all the

years since the Centenary Conference. In several parts of China union or independent Churches were formed, some on a local scale, and others on more nearly national lines.

And now I shall tax your patience but for a moment more to point out to you one of our primal needs. In such a national and Christian situation as I have just described our greatest need is for leaders with clear insight, indomitable courage and selfless spirit. We need leaders with clear insight so that we may not miss our way in the wilderness. We need leaders with indomitable courage so that misfortunes and setbacks may not daunt our hearts. We need leaders with the selfless spirit so that we may all learn to work for the new China in the spirit of the prayer of St. Ignatius Loyola :

> To give without counting the cost,
> To fight without heeding the wounds,
> To toil without seeking for rest,
> To labour without asking for reward.

And where can such leaders be found ? Only in men and women whose lives are in touch with the eternal spirit of God. These only will possess that unerring insight to divine the purpose of God in any given situation. These only will have that courage to work with that purpose through thick and thin. These only can yield all with gladness and abandon to the service of their fellow-men in the name of God the Father. Such was the life Christ led among men. Such is the life we must lead if the Kingdom of God is to come among the

nations of the world. And so the Christian students of China invite you, in this inscription they have sent you, " to move forward together in this great adventure." For, surely, there can be no greater adventure in life than the discovery of God's purpose in our own life and in the life of the world, and to give ourselves without reserve to follow wherever that purpose may lead us.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

II

In Racial Relationships

Mr. C. F. Andrews, M.A.,
India.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

II

In Racial Relationships

"Pilate said, 'Am I a Jew?'"

These four words of Pilate, the Roman Governor, with reference to Jesus, the Jewish Prisoner, charged with sedition against Roman Imperialism, bring us to the very heart of the race problem of modern times. For we always come back, in some form or other, to the actual domination of one race by another as the root cause of all the evil. Arrogance is the curse that destroys all that is simple, beautiful and natural in those divinely-appointed human relationships, which are called racial. This wonderful thing, Race, which was meant by God to give harmony and colour to human life, and to prevent dull uniformity, becomes turned into a vast and awful fanaticism leading to war, cruelty, lust, passion, and every other iniquity.

Just as the Gospel story with one startling flash gives us, in the scene of Jesus before Pilate, the ultimate issue of race arrogance, so we have, in a quite different and very tender picture, the opposite effect of race sympathy. For we are told

how the Jews themselves brought a Roman Centurion to Jesus, whose servant was sick: "And they, when they came to Jesus, besought him earnestly, saying, 'This man is worthy that thou shouldst do this thing for him; for he loveth our nation, and built us a synagogue.'" It is through such individuals, who can rise above the fanatical hatreds of the age, and love other nations, that the virus of race prejudice is annulled. We shall see, when I conclude, that the one final remedy for all the race problems of the world is individual spiritual effort and individual love overcoming hate.

The Christian religion, at its inception, stood out boldly for racial equality. There were violent controversies within the Early Church, and this issue had to be faced at once by St. Paul in order to win perfect freedom for non-Jewish races. But as the controversy proceeded, the question was settled once and for all when the fundamental declaration was made, that there could not possibly be any distinction between the Jew and the Greek, the barbarian and the Scythian, the slave and the free man, within the Church, because all were "one humanity" in Christ Jesus.

This charter of race equality was never seriously challenged by any Christian until the evil days of the slave trade, and the setting up of that cruellest of all distinctions between slave and slave-owner. Race churches, in which the races worship separately, were originally slave churches. They arose out of this brutal distinction on a slave basis. They represent, when analysed, the ultimate fact of racial domination.

Though it was the disgrace of my own country to fight fiercely to retain the monopoly of the slave traffic between Africa and America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, yet it was also the glory of Great Britain that she gave many of the noblest pioneers in the long struggle for the abolition of slavery. A famous historian has said that the one purely disinterested act in modern politics has been the abolition of slavery. It is with an infinite relief that we read how our own forefathers carried through that struggle. Let me emphasise, in passing, that it was through individuals, inspired by a dynamic spiritual faith, that the victory was obtained. Not by might, not by power, but by God's Spirit was the end accomplished.

This same victory reverberated in a thousand other directions. It gave a generous outlook to the nineteenth century, making it perhaps the greatest century of humane liberalism in all historical experience. The breath of freedom, which had tended to make men fair-minded in thought and deed, spread over earth. We have the Parliamentary Proclamation of Racial Equality in India, as early as 1833. This was repeated in the Queen's Charter of 1858. The whole Colonial policy of Great Britain—in Cape Colony, Natal, the West Indies, and other exceedingly difficult racial areas —was decided at first on the same progressive lines. In other countries, also, the same spirit of freedom prevailed. Such outstanding figures as Lincoln in America, and Gladstone in Great Britain, made this one principle of equality secure.

Whatever difficulties might arise in practice, yet in the eyes of the law all men and all races were made equal. This one sovereign truth had almost seemed at one time to have established itself finally for mankind in the same way that the abolition of slavery had done.

It has been my own task to study the official documents with regard to Indian and Colonial affairs during this great age of liberal statesmanship in last century, when Gladstone, Bright and others were in full power. They felt from the bottom of their hearts, that there must be nothing within the British Constitution which meant in the eyes of the law racial inequality. Now and then, great battles were fought over this issue ; but the principle itself was always acknowledged. It was this principle, and this principle alone, that made Mahatma Gandhi, in early South African days, such a profound believer in the British Constitution. He believed it to be the one supreme champion of racial freedom.

But the pendulum has swung back. The reaction came towards the close of the nineteenth century. While equality between the *white* races has become acknowledged, equality *outside* the white races has now been violently challenged. What has sometimes been called the " Religion of the White Race " has in some directions taken the place of the Christian religion, to all intents and purposes. It has become a far more potent force, in some parts of the world, than Christianity itself.

This " White Race Religion " has carried with

it always in its train domination and economic exploitation. With such immensely powerful adjuncts as these, it has been able, subtly but surely, to undermine both the British Constitution and also the American Constitution, as may be witnessed in the " white " revolt in Kenya in 1923, and in the lynching which still goes on in the Southern States of America. These things have left " racial equality " to-day, in many parts of the world, merely a façade without any substantial background ; a theory without corresponding practice. The British Colonial Office, with its long earlier traditions of racial equality, has fought a brave fight against this reactionary tendency ; but it has been obliged to give way again and again so as virtually to acknowledge in practice that there is one law for the white race, as the superior race, and another law for the coloured races, as inferior. Thus the Christian principle of racial equality, which was upheld by the greatest statesmen of last century, has now been abandoned in action, and this insidious change has been wrought so gradually that it has almost escaped detection. Mahatma Gandhi has entirely lost the faith he had before. He holds now, after the bitter experience of " Amritsar," that the British Constitution is an hypocrisy, professing one thing and practising another.

" White Racialism " has infected, as I have said, the Christian Church. That is the crowning calamity. When I was in South Africa, in 1913-14, Mahatma Gandhi was refused admission to a Christian Church, even at the Christian season of

peace and goodwill, when he went in love and brotherhood in order to hear me preach. An Indian Christian would have received exactly the same treatment, and so would a Chinese Christian, or an African Christian. We have thus got a professing religion to-day, which calls itself Christian, but does not acknowledge the ultimate Christian principle of racial equality. It cannot truly say: "We are all 'one Humanity' in Christ Jesus." It cannot repeat this, because it does not believe it, and also does not practise it over large areas.

When I came back from South Africa, on a very short visit to England, early in 1914, my heart was full of pain at this racialism within the Christian Church which I had just witnessed in Natal. But the whole atmosphere in England was buzzing with the secondary issue of the Kikuyu Controversy, while this racial wrong, which was actually destroying Christ's religion at its very root, had been left in the lurch. It was not possible to get the slightest hearing for this matter, which was so radical in its destructive power.

The World War followed, and now the same racial tragedy has every day grown worse and worse. For since the War, and in keeping with the brutality of the war spirit, we have suffered terribly, in India, by "Amritsar." In Kenya, we have seen a racial franchise and a racial conscription imposed; we have had forced labour urged upon us by administrators. We have had also a Colour Bar Act in South Africa, which is an outrage to mankind. Is it to be wondered at, then, if the Simon

Commission, on which only white men have been allowed to sit, is nicknamed in India a "White Race Commission"?

Meanwhile, racial churches, growing up like noxious weeds, have spread this virus far and wide. There are actually to-day *Christian* Churches where devoted apostles of Christ's love, like the late Dr. Aggrey, would not even be admitted. He did not happen to belong to the dominant white race. He was not a "white man." Therefore he could not attend the white man's Church.

Is Christ divided?

I have not paused to argue out the full case for racial equality, but have taken it as one of the final facts of the Christian religion, just as it is also a final fact in other world religions of mankind. The infinite shame is this, that while, for instance, the faith of Islam and the Buddhist faith—to their honour, be it said—practise as well as preach race equality, yet over large areas of the world those who profess the Christian faith do *not* practise, but merely preach. What shame, to a sincere Christian, can be greater than that?

Again and again when we go abroad—and even sometimes in England itself—the question is put to us by those who belong to other religions: "Why do Christians alone to-day uphold racial inequality, and judge men according to the colour of their skin?" If we protest, and assert vehemently that Christ never taught such things, we are brought up against the fact that Christ's followers actually practise them on such a large

scale that they fill up the picture in certain lands abroad. They ask us the searching question: "Did not Christ say, 'By their fruits shall ye know them. Can men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?'" We have no answer.

It is an African proverb which says: "Your deeds speak so loudly to me that I cannot hear what your words say." Surely, in Africa and elsewhere, our racial deeds have spoken so loudly that our professions now carry no weight at all. How could it be otherwise? It is these loud-speakers all over the world—these racial Churches of Christendom—which trumpet forth our sins. No wonder that the still small voice of the Holy Spirit of God cannot be heard. No wonder that the portrait of the meek and lowly Christ awaits recognition, unknown and unloved.

What, then, remains to be done? Are we to fold our hands? Are we merely to sit silent?

That is not what our forefathers did, when they were faced with slavery. However few they were, they felt so deeply, as individuals, the crying wrong, that they were ready to lay down their lives for the truth. The one single death of John Smith of Demerara—the young missionary who died in a fetid tropical prison on behalf of the slaves in British Guiana—did more to abolish slavery than all the other strivings put together. It gave the moral power behind the plea of Wilberforce and others, which carried it home to men's hearts.

What is needed to-day is a revival of the spirit of Christian martyrdom. That great word "mar-

tyrdom " has a fine background and a noble meaning. It signifies witness in action. It is only those who have carried their faith to the test of action—those who have lived for their faith with the joyful consciousness that at any moment they may be called upon to die for it—it is only such men and women who are able to hold their own position without wavering when the crucial test comes. It is only these who can wrest victory out of defeat. There must be no compromise : no betrayal : no looking back. The test is a *crucial* test ; for it is always, in some way or other, the test of the Cross.

Because the issue is so grave : because it is a matter of life and death—not to you and me only, but to the Christian Faith itself, as it is lived and practised among men—for that reason I have waited in England for this Liverpool Conference, in order, if God gives me grace and strength, to pass on to the Christian students of this generation—and especially, may I add, those of my own dear country—the burning indignation that we all feel, who are abroad, as we face the mischief done to Christ's Church. We are determined, before we die, to right it in Christ's name, and we ask your help to do it. We ask you to redeem this racial wrong in the present generation.

Very soon the call may come to finish what has been given to me, personally, to carry through in the short life-span allotted by God ; for I am nearing the age of sixty, and this body of mine has been tried by constant illness in the tropics. But if it were only possible to deliver over to the keeping of the present generation, both men and

women, this one supreme longing of our hearts—this longing to remove from the fair name of Christ the racial reproach, and to bring to an end, for His sake, these racial Christian Churches, then we who have grown old could joyfully make way for others, whose idealism is untouched by the caution of old age and whose lives are still ardently adventurous. We cannot, we must not, we dare not, swerve one hair's breadth from the great charter of human solidarity and human redemption which Christ Himself has given us : for

> In Him, there can be neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, for all are one man in Christ Jesus.

This racial issue, on which I have given you my heart, has been no easy one to deal with. To speak about it at a conference like this could not be lightly undertaken. Such deep-rooted evils as are now bound up with it have only one sure remedy, and Christ Himself has made the remedy plain in these words : "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone ; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it ; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me let him follow me, and where I am there shall also my servant be."

God's purpose in the world is clear. May we have grace to fulfil it !

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

III

In Industry and Commerce

Mr. Ben Turner,
President National Union of Textile Workers

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

III

In Industry and Commerce

The position of Religion in Industry and Commerce has been the subject of interminable controversy during the whole of my adult lifetime.

There are people who stoutly affirm that the teachings and preachings of the New Testament cannot be carried into mill, factory, or warehouse.

Even some strong-minded supporters of religious life, persons who dominate Church and Chapel, declare that religion must not interfere in business.

They are not hypocrites or Pharisees either—they are men who have been brought up in the tradition which separates Sunday's religion from Monday's business conduct. There are also known to be men who proclaim no religion or religious association, but who act as if they were believers in the Divine life and are as active as anyone in their search after righteousness.

This contrariness or these contradictions are understandable, for within us all—even the wildest of men—there is an inborn desire to do what is right. Circumstances, environment, association,

education (or lack of it) make us what we are today. The old Adam is within us in varying degrees, and whilst it may be comforting to blame Adam, it is but an excuse for our own weaknesses.

I am sure the tenets of the New Testament can be put into everyday life. The great mission of the Master was to build up a Society based on Co-operation, Brotherhood, and Love. This is exemplified in the message in the Acts of the Apostles, wherein it declares that they who believed were together and held things in common. Some have tried to whittle down this to mean they joined at one another's toothbrush and other domestic or personal utensils. Such an assumption is silly. What it does mean is that all God's world, all God's products must be used for all God's children. The very essence of the Lord's Prayer teaches that. We are the children of the one Father. It is not thy Father, nor my Father, it is our Father : we all, whether black, white, brown or yellow, are His children.

If we divorce Monday's manners and methods from Sunday's grace, we retard the progress of Christianity as a world power. There is considerable weakness and competition in our Industrial system which is not for the good of religion or of mankind. There is the devil in full stride in Industry, Commerce, Finance and international and worldly dealings. The man who deals in stocks and shares does so with a view of making money—not by producing anything tangible, not by making another blade of grass grow, or by bringing into being a new raw material or a better

finished product, but by making money by sharpness of brain and in living on exchange and getting really something for nothing! The whole idea of making money is in itself a mischief-creating notion! Yet the whole of us live by and for it. Money or wealth and power is our week-day god. It is the God of Mammon that yet rules the day. True it is here and there we find successful men tinged with remorse, with sympathy, with feeling, but the Juggernaut car grinds its victims down to the dust.

Alas! If I were buying spot wheat or cotton, I should be buying for a rise or fall, or vice versa, just as seemed best, or as other circumstances compelled me. If I were out of work and a man was killed I should be sorry the man was killed, but pleased if I could get his job, and would run a mile to be there before somebody else had got it. It is a form of semi-cannibalism that, weighed up, disturbs me. It isn't that we are inwardly bad—not a bit of it. It is because we want financial security, financial stability for ourselves. We don't object to others having it, but it is ourselves first.

When I look round and see what we are doing—all of us—it fills me with pain and some disgust, and I wonder and wonder if we cannot alter the system so that men and women can get the fulness of life in place of eating each other up. There is in this world an abundance of all the good things man requires or desires, but we have a higgledy-piggledy system going on that gives to a few power to unconsciously inflict want and poverty on millions of people. There is an old doctrine in

Scriptures somewhere, and it was put out in an encyclical in the eighteenth century, that bodies of land, air and water should not be privately owned! To me it seems that so long as these, life's primary essentials, are privately held, then men who own them are masters, and men who do not must beg permission to live and are in the category of slaves to other men.

God made no man master nor no man slave. It is man who has twisted the world's affairs wrong. There are three things that man must have in this world of materialism over and above his spiritual and social desires, namely, food, clothing and shelter. Unless he can procure these he cannot live, yet millions are lacking in these essentials. Why? It is not for lack of these things; it is not for lack of materials or labour; it is not due to an absence of skill or scientific attainments. We have the productive power to supply every man, woman and child with the material things needed for a full life. The millions needing clothes can be supplied by the looms and the weavers of Lancashire and Yorkshire. There are a few hundred thousand miners waiting to dig for coal and a million homes with a coal shortage these winter nights. This time of new resolves finds men and women full of the urge to help the distress in our mining areas. It shows that underneath the hidden recesses of our hearts there are deep seams of human love and sympathy, and it needs that this great human emotion should be harnessed into our social system so that men and women should not be in need of the cast-off clothing of other folks, or be shod at

the expense of occasional charity. This wave of good feeling should be so used that production and distribution shall be scientifically and humanly organised to feed, clothe and house everybody.

We have mastered the science of production, but we have not touched the art of proper distribution or supplying human needs except at a price and at a profit. It is a disastrous system. Houses are built, clothes are made, boots are manufactured, not on purpose to house and clothe the people, but to profit by so doing, and the result is not beneficial to us. It cannot be claimed that it is Socialism or co-operation that has led us into this abyss—private enterprise has had full swing for ages.

Perhaps I am too dismal in my outlook, but it does seem to me that private enterprise, the enterprise of the money-lender and the money-changer, has led to the present disastrous state of affairs. It is only when we get into the realms of State or municipal activities that we get nearer to the purpose of the great Creator who made the world for all his people, and who urges us to be one with each other, living a life of co-operation and usefulness. I have no blame to cast upon anyone. I only wonder if a system cannot be devised that will make us all brothers.

At varying times in our industrial and commercial history there come along men and women imbued with a love for their fellow men, who suggest methods to extricate us from our man-made bondage. I have seen many big men arise who, ashamed of our national nakedness, have tried to lead us out

of the morass of needless enmity and suffering. This nobleness springs out of the eternal doctrine of mutuality and brotherhood. Robert Owen, Shaftesbury, Ernest Jones, Richard Oastler, Francis Place, Charles Kingsley, John Fielden, and many others can be named who in the last century worked for social reform and won an everlasting name by their speeches, writings and deeds. When the old Christian Socialists put forward their views in the middle of last century, they did it because they felt co-operation was better than competition.

All the social reform and social services of today, good and useful as they are, are applying the doctrines of the Nazarene to present-day life and purpose. It is true they have in many instances been put into operation clumsily, but the idea behind these social services is the recognition that we are, after all, our brothers' keepers.

I am very full of the faith behind the story wherein it says : " I was an hungered and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, I was sick and ye visited me." The old friendly societies (started ages ago) began because they felt and knew the urge within them each to help his fellow-man when stricken with sickness. I am certain the old trades unions established their out-of-work and travelling benefits out of a desire to make provision for men seeking work in other towns, and for helping them over the unemployed crisis that came with the development of trade and commerce.

It is surely a fact that the State was called upon

over a hundred years ago to protect young people from long hours and evil factory conditions and to correct the greed and avarice of other men to exploit them unduly or inhumanly. The very extensiveness of our present—but still inadequate—social services in the form of baby clinics, child welfare centres, maternity homes, school medical services, homes for the aged, hospitals for the sick, arose out of the desire of communities to carry out the message of the Master.

However, behind all this great work there is much illness that is preventible, much poverty that is man-made, and we have to unite the spirit of religion to the chariot of commerce so as to remove these blots upon twentieth-century civilisation.

There is, I feel sure, an ever-growing movement in industry and commerce to humanise, civilise and Christianise life in mill, mine and factory. The spirit behind pit-head baths is to respect man's cleanliness of body and to prevent the pit grime from desecrating a man's home.

The moving spirit behind welfare centres, canteens, playing fields, social recreation, is right in so far as it is aiming to raise the standard of manhood and womanhood, physically and spiritually.

There is just now a big movement to get Employers' Associations and Trades Unions acting together to prevent lock-outs and strikes. Some of my friends hold that the move is one to rationalise industry for the purpose of extracting more profit for the shareholder. This may apply to the odd ones who are blinded with passion for power and

riches. I hold the view that many folks are sore at the helplessness of industry and its human relationships and are willing to explore any avenue that will lead towards industrial peace and social happiness. Of course there cannot be industrial peace with social happiness so long as we simultaneously make one millionaire and ten thousand poor people, or where the few become over-wealthy and the many become paupers. There can be no abolition of industrial strife if each man still works on the old plan of every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost.

I wouldn't like to live if I thought society would continue to run itself on those lines. But I know that some time in our own land we shall evolve a state of society based upon the truths of the Testament, upon the actual lines of the Ten Commandments, upon the principles of the Sermon on the Mount, and upon the Lord's Prayer. It is this which keeps me young in faith and hope for a saner Britain.

I am not without hope that the Turner-Mond conference or talks will lead to a better understanding in industry. It is time we had one. It is the outcome of men's desires to end the class war, the sectional frictions, and it is a movement destined to humanise, Christianise the industrial conditions of labour and also the methods of commerce.

The three big things in the Mond-Turner Reports already issued were the one on Trade Union recognition, the one on victimisation, and the one forming a National Joint Industrial Council.

This latter will stop ninety-nine disputes out of a hundred, for no big industrial lock-out or strike would take place until every ounce of reason and conciliation had been used.

It may be better or it may be worse in other parts of the world, but it is not good enough anywhere, and I have a feeling that this hankering after " summat for nowt," this craze to be fashionable, this adding field to field, and house to house is not in the best interests of our nation. If these talks can lead to a simplicity of life—not a mean life, but a simpler mode of life—it will be to the good of society. Pleasure that is pure is the best, but pleasure that leaves a nasty taste behind it is not real, but artificial, and the artificial is not the best for us.

This applies in mill, factory, warehouse and mine. If we do not bear and forbear, if we do not let love of mankind have full play in industry, we are not fulfilling the Divine law. I do not suggest that mill life should start with church ceremonial —that would be cheapening religion. I do not think it needful to open a business meeting with hymns and prayers. Prayers should be in one's heart ; prayers for a nobler line of life, for forgiveness, for mercy, for helpfulness towards each other, for a fairer plan of society. It shouldn't be prayer alone, for prayer without works is again wanting " summat for nowt." We should work to so organise society and industry that we can, acting in concert, in loving co-operation, bring out the best in mankind and fill the homes of the people with peace and plenty. We should not pray for another

war. I have been shocked to learn of folks saying trade wouldn't mend until we had another war, thereby loosely imagining that war is good for trade. The evil effects of the last war are still with us. All war is wrong in the sight of the Prince of Peace. We should pray for and work for Peace.

Peace on Earth and Goodwill towards men is an eternal axiom to carry out in both industry and commerce.

There is a wide opening for all students of religion to help on the work of the International Labour Office at Geneva. That body has, in raising the standards of work and hours and conditions affecting labour in many parts of the world, put into practice the ideal of doing unto others as we would be done by, and has helped to set a high standard of life and civilisation in different parts of the world of industry. Its conventions ratified and unratified have been a boon and a blessing to women and children in India, China, Japan, Germany, Belgium, Italy, France and many other countries. I would urge all students of Christian thought and life to make a special study of the work of the I.L.O. It was brought into being by Article XIII of the Treaty of Versailles. It is the most important factor in the League of Nations work, for it makes for international industrial progress, and that in itself is a forward step towards international peace and justice.

I have often been pained to see men think themselves superior because they had a few shillings a week more income than their fellow-men. The manager is only flesh and blood like the other

fellow, and we are all equal in the sight of the Creator. I have seen the better-placed in worldly goods sneer at the less-placed, but the better-placed ought to be thankful he is luckier than the others.

Many a man believes he is a superman, but alas, his feet are of clay. This alleged superiority leads to much friction in the world of industry. There is really more worry and trouble over the antics and actions of men in authority than there is in the differences over price lists and wages.

Then, again, I would like to see gentleness carried into industry. I would like less bullying, more clean language and an absence of cringing to the boss or tale-telling and meanness one towards each other. It is far nicer to be good and fair than to be bad and mean. I want to see a more co-operative spirit inside the works, for I am sure it would be for the good of industry itself, and men should not be looked upon as a number or a peg or less worthy than the machine.

It is also certain that in industry itself we are taught the lesson of co-operation, for none of us can live by our own labour, but we live by and with the labour of all. No man makes a piece of cloth or a pair of boots by himself. A loaf of bread is the creation not of a baker, but of many men, including the miller, the farmer, the man with the muck rake, and so on. It is the co-operation of men with the aid of the sun, the moon, the stars, the winds, the rains, the hills, and the valleys, the rivers and the elements which aid us in our every-day productions and our very lives.

If there are millions reeking in needless poverty in a land overflowing with milk and honey, something is wrong and there is a social sore needs healing. We are not acting up to the real religion if we make Money our six-days-a-week god and only use the God of Love on Sundays.

We need religion in both industry and commerce. It means fairness, justness, decent conduct, decent work, and decent conditions of labour. It makes the human factor the prime factor in the production and distribution of the world's products. It will lift us out of the old ruts of serving false idols and turn us right about face towards the heaven upon earth that all want for themselves and which we must work for, so that all may attain and gain it.

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

IV

Through the Christian Church

The Archbishop of York

GOD AT WORK IN THE WORLD

IV

Through the Christian Church

Everyone nowadays is familiar with the point of view from which a sharp distinction is drawn between Christ and the Church; it is more than a distinction, it is a contrast. There are many who say, "I reverence Christ, and believe that His teaching points to the true way of life; but I have no use for the Church, which not only fails to exhibit His spirit, but by obtruding its vast bulk of organisation and dogma between men and the simple teaching of Jesus obscures for ordinary folk the light by which they would live, if only they could see it." Such notions are sometimes uttered from outside the organised Churches, sometimes from within them. Probably the utterances from within are the more frequent, but this may be only because those within are more articulate in relation to such thoughts. Anyhow, we are given to understand that wherever the utterances come from, the view expressed is held by countless multitudes.

Now, there are some very obvious reflections which arise in the mind of a Christian who be-

lieves that the Church is itself an essential and indispensable part of Christianity ; and with these obvious reflections I will begin. Then I will try to mitigate the difficulties which arise from our disappointing experience of the actual Church by attempting some explanation of the facts which cause our bewilderment ; and thirdly I will offer some reasons for the conviction that those who would live as followers of Christ should live as loyal though critical, and critical though loyal, members of the Church.

I

1. First then, if the Church is right in its own interpretation of itself and of its Lord, the contrast complained of is what must be expected. For its Lord is the sinless Redeemer, perfect in love amidst selfish society ; while the Church as an actual, historic community, is an assembly of sinners, still in their varying ways and degrees selfish with the selfishness that is natural to all men and is the real Original Sin, though belonging to the fellowship of those who seek from the love of Christ the power that shall win them out of natural selfishness into divine love. If we expect to find the community of Christian believers in our own day a living embodiment of the Holy Spirit we are expecting what could not be true without frustrating the very purpose for which the Church exists. It does not exist to be the home only of almost perfected saints, but to be the home of sinners at any depth of degradation

who yet believe that Christ can transform them into His own likeness. I know this only meets half the difficulty and I am coming to the other half later. But even this obvious consideration is often ignored, as it has often been ignored in times gone by. The history of the Church is full of attempts to make it an exclusive society of saints ; so far as those efforts have secured scope for their development by expressing themselves in separated sects, those sects have tended to consist, not of perfected saints characterised by humility and love, but of Pharisees, cranks, and prigs. After all, the first necessity for man is to be human, and it is better to be a sympathetic sinner than to be a censorious righteous person, for censorious righteousness is always self-centred and therefore has not commenced its escape from the Original Sin.

All of this runs back to the conflict which is the pivot of the Gospel drama. Christ sets before us that humanly unattainable ideal—the combination of the highest moral standard with unfailing tenderness for those who fall below it. And the righteous indignation of the Sinless One goes out against one sin only—the righteous indignation of the sinful. But those who had reached the moral level which makes righteous indignation possible felt that the Lord's universality of love was a condonation of the evils above which they had risen ; it was treason to the moral attainment of their nation, and they were more indignant against Him for loving sinners than against sinners for being sinful.

The Church is constantly tempted to Pharisaism: it is the besetting sin of religious people. But many of those who complain of the Church and especially those who wish it to substitute an ethical for a doctrinal creed as its foundation, are encouraging it in the fault to which it is most prone. That it should have a doctrinal, not an ethical foundation, follows from loyalty to Christ the lover of all, in whom all can find the strength which they have not in themselves, and to whom as the source of such strength the Church must continually point.

2. But for this very reason we need more than words can express, the prophets who recall the Church to the manner of life that its doctrinal basis involves. If Christ be the revelation of God, there is a way to live that corresponds; His own teaching expounds its principles and the circumstances of every generation give the field for their application. That the Church should be sluggish in this task is an evil second to none, save only a failure to hold fast the faith which lays that task upon it. We need the voices which cry out against us who profess discipleship to Jesus: "The Name of Christ is blasphemed among the nations because of you." No flame of denunciation can be too fierce to be directed against our complacency, our sluggishness, our failure in faith as shown by our works or lack of them.

The trouble is that the message so often reaches the wrong quarter. When Mr. Sheppard published his book, *The Impatience of a Parson*, one desired that every communicant should study it

on his knees, but that no one else should ever hear of it. For, after the manner of prophets, Mr. Sheppard omitted most of what he took for granted, namely the Church's fundamental beliefs. But many of his readers did not take these for granted, and gathered from the book that they could do very well without these things if they would give their minds to the others on which he dwelt. That is a mere delusion. The Christian faith and life are all of one piece. You try loving your neighbour as yourself without loving God—not your friend, mind, but your neighbour; the folk who live near you with their snobbish views and irritating manners; your employers, who despise you or oppress you; your employees, who cheat you or who shirk their work; the people with whom you have any sort of accidental dealings—try to love them as yourself without loving God. It can't be done. Then try to love God without any doctrine about Christ, without any co-operation in worship with your fellow disciples—not just a God of your own conceiving—the Good, the Beautiful, the True, who satisfies all your personal aspirations, but the Father of all men, Who loves your disagreeable neighbours as much as He does you, and does not want you in His company unless you can be glad that they should be there too. It can't be done.

The duties to which the Christian prophets call us are only possible if the doctrines of the Christian creed are true, and in the strength of faith in those doctrines and participation in the worship which is the primary function of the Church.

3. Once more, to continue these obvious reflections, the standard by which the Church is criticised is that which it has itself supplied to its critics. There is a Bible, there is a conception of Christian obligation, only because the Church has kept them alive. I do not know if this address was intended to provide a sketch of what historically God has done for mankind through the Church; if so, the wrong man was asked to give it, for I do not know enough history for the task. But it is certainly true that in the past—in the Dark Ages, for example—the Christian tradition itself would have disappeared if there had not been a very definitely organised body committed to its maintenance. But I do not pause to develop this theme, for even those who are ready to dispense with the Church to-day are usually willing to admit its utility, at least, in former generations. And that for the moment is all I am concerned to urge; of its necessity for ourselves and for all time I will say something later.

II

If sympathy is the first of virtues, we must try to understand why Christians organised as a society have been, and are, so sluggish in the action which seems to us to be demanded by the faith which they profess. It is charged against the Church that it is a starkly conservative influence, always blocking the pathway to progress; and there is enough truth in the charge to make Churchmen contrite, but also to make critics seek its cause.

Christianity is on one side a religion; and religion is always largely emotional, for if the emotions are not touched, belief hardly amounts to what has been meant by the word religion. But emotions are largely stimulated by association, and for most people (to whom ideas of what might be are far less vivid than memory of what has been and what is) this will mean that the religious emotions are chiefly kindled by the familiar. Everyone who has tried to introduce a new tune to a well-known hymn has found that out. Association is stronger than æsthetic judgment in arousing emotion; but it is stronger also than any other kind of judgment, and there will only be strong popular emotion in support of a moral judgment when that moral judgment is itself conventional and familiar. For this reason all human religion is strongly conservative, and Christianity shares with all human religion the tendency to conservatism and conventionalism. But this is not in so far as it is Christian, but in so far as it is Religion. Religion has been the greatest influence in history, but it would be very hard to say whether it has been a source of more good or more evil. It has conserved many good things, including some of the best; but it has been guilty of the greatest abominations in recorded history. The Crucifixion and the Inquisition are among the works of religion.

But Christianity is committed to Progress. From the moment when the Lord attributed divine authority to the Mosaic Law and replaced that Law by another, and St. Paul in like manner

attributed divine authority to the Law and pronounced it abrogated, Christianity has been committed to Progress; for there can be no stronger assertion of the doctrine of Progress than to say of some institution that it was of God's appointment for one period and not for another. And the governing principle of Christian conduct is not a code but a Spirit—to whose sphere of activity no limit can be set. The true disciple is always "forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forth to the things which are before, pressing on to the goal of the call upwards which God gives in Christ Jesus."

Whenever the common element of Religion is allowed to preponderate over discipleship to Jesus Christ, the Church becomes stagnant and an active principle of stagnation. But before any one takes up a censorious attitude towards the Church for this inversion of true proportions, let him reflect how hard he finds it steadily to refer all his own purposes and judgments to the Mind of Christ. Let him that is without sin in this matter first cast a stone.

But if we have thus learnt how to sympathise with the Church in its failure, we have at the same time seen how to cure the failure in ourselves and to that extent in the Church.

III

But, after all, the centre of the charge is not that the Church fails to be perfectly Christian, but that so many outside the Church are more

Christian than those within it. This is a profoundly serious matter, and there are facts which forbid a mere dismissal of the charge. But some questions must be asked. These noble souls of Christ-like spirit who stand aloof from the Church —where did they learn their principles ? They are products of a partly Christianised civilisation, in which the Church is the chief agency in recalling the teachings of Christ if only by its constant reading of the Gospels in its worship. If the Church perishes, will civilisation certainly produce more such noble souls in future ? And if the Church is necessary to the reproduction of citizens like themselves, should they not join and help the Church to secure that object, even if they have nothing to gain from it themselves ? Is it indeed conceivable that they have nothing to gain ?

The facts, however, are not all of one kind. The critics under consideration usually ignore the whole overseas missionary enterprise of the Church. I give one instance only. A short time back we celebrated the Jubilee of the first preaching of the Gospel in Uganda. There is a great-nation utterly transformed in fifty years. It was the Church that did it. The isolated individuals who criticise could never have achieved it. A Christianity of merely individual believers can never become the agency of world-regeneration. No doubt we are doing far less than we ought. But it is quite plain that only the organised Church is carrying on this work, and without an organised Church it could not be carried on at

all. This is a big weight in the scale of the Church, but once stated the fact is too obvious to call for long disquisition.

The critics have in view rather the support of the League of Nations, the eradication of the seeds of war, the promotion of social fellowship, and the remedying of such evils as the Housing Problem. Here again we have to admit a fearful sluggishness, which may bring on both Church and civilisation a fearful judgment. If another European war or a social revolution breaks out the Church will be justly to blame for the feebleness of its witness and its influence. And yet, when all this is said and said very truly, the Church, at any rate in this country of which alone I speak with knowledge, is officially at least on the right side, and that more constantly than any agency except the specialist societies dedicated to the solution of particular problems. When we turn to the actual day-to-day work of social service, it is probably true that nine-tenths of it is done by people attached to Christian congregations and deriving their inspiration from definite Church membership. This is sometimes obscured by the fact that much of the work is done through agencies in whose titles the Church name does not appear. But the Church's work is not limited to what is done under its own name ; it includes all done through other channels which is sustained by its inspiration. The Church is doing less than it ought to do ; but it is doing nine-tenths of what is being done at all.

For such reasons alone the Church could rightly

say to its critics: "Do not cease to criticise; I need it; for my members are just human beings, easily falling back to the level above which the Spirit in me is ever lifting them. But criticise from within, not from without. After all, your complaint really rests on your knowledge that the Church is called to offer the world such service as you see the world to need. Come in and help; you can do more by directing and strengthening the Church's influence than you can ever do by complaining that the influence is not greater. If you stay outside you will only satisfy yourself by your protestations; and what is the good of satisfying one little self? Come in and lend a hand; you will have no satisfaction in yourself or in the work accomplished; but you may help to save a world."

And that is not all. Those who take loftily the high privilege of Church membership are not disappointed with what they find. If your attachment is limited to dropping in for a service now and again, and then making no effort of concentration or devotion, always expecting to be carried along on a tide of spiritual emotion, of course you will find little. It is a law of the spiritual life that we receive in proportion as we give—more indeed than we give, far more, but in proportion. If your Church membership means a realisation of fellowship with your co-disciples because of your common devotion to the one Lord; and if, accordingly, your worship is a submission of mind and heart and will, in union with your fellows, that Christ may possess you

wholly ; and if then you seek to take your part in the Church's work, not to gain what you can from it even of spiritual benefit, but to give what you can of yourself to help its good work, then you will find there, as nowhere else, the call to new labours and the power to persevere in them. You may or may not have success ; you may or may not have satisfaction ; but you will know that your life is changed and that you could not bear to return to its former quality.

All through the ages Christ, by His Spirit, repeats within His Church the miracle of renewed vitality. Often it seems moribund ; often the progressive spirit of which it is the home seems more active outside it than within it ; for we who are members of the Church are very imperfect in faith and devotion. Yet these apparently separated movements either pass away or fall back into the Church. But the Church itself abides, always refuting the critics by giving birth to new prophets, new visions, new heroes, new martyrs. Do not forgo that great inheritance which is yours. The Church needs you ; but far more deeply do you need the Church. Its treasure is contained in earthen vessels ; but in those vessels is the treasure that is worth more than all the world, the treasure which you can only enjoy by giving it to others, the treasure of the Love Divine whereby the world is redeemed.

VOCATION AND FELLOWSHIP

Dr. A. D. Lindsay,
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VOCATION AND FELLOWSHIP

Vocation and Fellowship. These are great words, and words that have a sort of inevitable appropriateness at a Conference like this. We are here, all of us, because in some sense we have felt a call to be here, or are at least prepared to listen to a call, a demand made on us for service or work of some kind ; and we all of us also know how, if we go about a piece of work in common, we get to belong together. We get an uplifting common understanding, and that at least is what we mean by fellowship.

The order of the words has some significance too. It is because we are called, drawn out of ourselves by a sense of all the imperative things there are for us to do, that we find ourselves forming a fellowship. Any relationship between human beings which does not unite them in the service of something beyond themselves becomes sooner or later an organisation for collective selfishness, or a process of living by taking in one another's emotional washing. But if we were possessed through and through by the hope of our calling, if we could see our work as part of God's purpose for the world, the fellowship, fruitful, invigorating and inspiring, would follow as a matter of course.

But when we give up thinking what we ought to

feel, and ask ourselves what we *do* feel, do we all really feel a conviction that we are called by God to do a special work in the world ? And if we do not feel that, have we any real conviction that God has a purpose for the world at all ? Have we either a firm enough conviction that God has a purpose for the world to be driven to find the special work God has for us: or enough conviction of the special call there is for us, to have faith that behind all the apparent confusion of outside events God is working out His purposes ? Is not the truth rather that we in this post-war generation more easily drift, take what happens to turn up, have at the best a gospel of tolerance, kindliness, and letting live—and that when we think of the world beyond our immediate concerns, all we see is aimless, bewildering confusion ? Even if we have the witness of God in our own hearts and personal experience, do we not usually feel how small and impotent are our vocation and fellowship in face of the great impersonal forces which seem to rule this post-war world ? Have we the courage and faith to play more than the part Plato assigned to the philosophers in the unjust city —the living of our own retired life like a man sheltering behind a wall in a storm of wind and rain ?

Nietzsche, at the beginning of his *Thus Spake Zoroaster*, relates how when Zoroaster was on his way down from the mountains to the haunts of men, he met an old hermit who told him that he spent his time by himself praying and praising God. And after they had parted, Zoroaster

laughed long to himself and said, "Is it then really possible—is it really possible that this old man has lived so long in the woods by himself that he has never heard that God is dead?" The easy natural view of the world to-day, on a first hasty glance, is that there is no purpose of God manifesting itself in the world, that the world is the sport of cold impersonal forces—necessity and chance, as Plato calls them. We can retire, like Zoroaster's hermit, into the solitude of our hearts for a time, and not hear the news, but if it is the authentic news, from the world without, that God is dead and that historical determinism reigns in His stead, sooner or later that news will invade our solitude.

Let us, therefore, to-night face this modern Apollyon, see where his strength comes from and why men believe in him, and see whether, "straddle though he may right across the path to the Celestial City," our vocation and our fellowship are strong enough weapons to bring him down.

If we try to find what differentiates this modern world in which we live from the world of earlier generations, we find at least this (and it is something with far-reaching consequences), that our world is dominated by economic exchange. In earlier stages of the world's history, most men lived on the land or in close dependence on men who lived on the land. Men's commerce—at least any kind of commerce which went beyond the people and the countryside they knew—played a small part in men's lives. Their fortunes

and their happiness depended on their own exertions, on the justice or injustice of the powerful men they knew and towards whom they could feel personal love or personal hate ; and on what they called the visitations of God—the blessings of fine weather and prosperous seasons, or the ineluctable strokes of famine and pestilence. They lived mostly in a small circle of human relationships. These and their striving with nature were all their concern. What broke into that circle from without was not in their power to bring or to stay ; it was matter for resignation or for blessing. The world they were entirely occupied with—which actually affected them—was predominantly personal, full of planning and purpose ; sometimes evil planning and unjust purpose, but planning and purpose of a kind all the time. How easy it was for men who lived like that to think of all the world in terms of their own small self-enclosed community—to think of those incomprehensible and unpredictable blessings or misfortunes which came from without as the outcome of a divine purpose they could only dimly understand !

How different is the world in which we live ! The barriers of the small circles in which our ancestors lived have been broken down ; thanks to the industrial revolution and the development of communications which has accompanied it, the world is now largely one economic market. The consequence is that most of us are continually affecting and being affected by hundreds of thousands of people all over the world, of whom we know nothing and who know nothing of us,

whose actions are hidden behind impersonal phrases like " the state of the market " or " the world demand." The development of this world-wide economic network has led to a prodigious increase in material wealth and comfort all over the world. But it has brought some new and unfamiliar evils with it. We in this country in these post-war years know well enough how thousands of men can suffer all the terrible evils of long-continued unemployment, not only through no fault of their own, but without it being possible to point to anyone whose obvious fault it is. Go to the devastated areas of the Tyne or South Wales, and contemplate all that suffering and waste of fine lives and noble energies, and ask who has done this evil thing—and the answer is " no one," in the sense that no one has consciously willed it. These things have come about as the result of men's actions, but they have not been willed. They are the result of the clumsy working of what we call the economic system. It is the nature of far-reaching economic relations that men can enter into them, can buy and sell from one another and so become in time closely dependent upon one another, without having any purpose in common. For that reason economic or business relations have spread more easily and rapidly than political or social relations : for these latter imply some sort of mutual understanding and some readiness to work and make sacrifices for common purposes. And in this way we have created a system of world-wide mutual inter-dependence which is as a whole humanity depersonalised. The system can serve as a most

efficient and wonderful instrument for human purposes, but those who cannot master, but are mastered by it seem to be in the grip of a grim abstraction.

Furthermore, just because the bad as well as the good results of this system are the accumulated effect of the independent activities of countless individuals, they are results before which the individual seems and is peculiarly impotent. The system seems not only impersonal, but infinitely more powerful than individual persons. Those who suffer from it have not even the satisfaction of feeling personal hate, or of calling for justice against their oppressors. Those whose actions are responsible for their plight—the men, for example, through whose efforts oil took the place of coal on ships, or the German chemists whose use of lignite lessened the world demand for coal—mostly knew nothing of those further effects of their actions from which others are suffering, and seem as impotent as anyone else to alter the general movement of the economic system. As men come to understand these things, they feel less hate and bitterness against those who are more fortunate than themselves, but only because they feel that we all are the sport—some the fortunate, some the unfortunate sport—of this blind impersonal system. We may plan and continue to make ourselves a little more fortunate, or to make the lives of others who suffer from the system a little less desperate and cruel: we can push the strands of the net that holds us a little bit up or down, and ease its chafing a little now and then: but that is

all that planning or purpose can do. The movement as a whole is blind and purposeless—ineluctable and relentless.

And so, if we can no longer see the purpose of God, or any purpose at all, governing the relations of men, how can we believe in the purpose of God in the world? That is the news that God is dead, and that materialism or chaos and ancient night reign in His stead.

> Eldest night,
> And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
> Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
> Of endless wars, and by Confusion stand.

That is the challenge of the new irreligion taught to hundreds and thousands of men by bitter personal experience, proclaimed wherever men proclaim their impotence to affect the rule of economic law or what they call historical forces, not invented by heretics, but taught and enforced by what seem to be the plain facts of the case.

What is the answer to it? The beginning of the answer of course is in our own hearts and personal experience—the sure knowledge which we all have and to which we can all hold, that love and pity and goodwill and the power that comes from pursuing in common unselfish purposes are realities—realities so sure and evident that all grim theories which prove that such things are unreal are thereby condemned as clearly untrue. That is the indispensable beginning to any answer.

But we might hold on to the witness of God in

our own hearts, and yet feel no assurance of his working in the life of the world. And it is, I think, a common fate of religious people of our time to feel impotent and baffled when they face the world—to have no such sure sense of God's power in the world as they have of his power in their own hearts.

There is one characteristic of the modern world as it affects men and women of goodwill which increases this sense of helplessness. Thanks to modern communications, and to the press, we all of us nowadays know of far more evils than men used to know of. Cries seem to come to us from all the world of people in distress, of misfortunes which could be alleviated and wrongs that could be put right. We have perforce to know of misfortunes we should like to help, and have to stand by powerlessly. " It is the greatest of miseries," said Herodotus long ago, " to know much and have power over nothing," and we are all in that state nowadays. And we can only do our own proper job steadily if we have not got to harden our hearts and shut our ears to these other cries—if we can believe that God hears them and is answering them. We must somehow be assured that God is working in the world, and we must answer this new materialism on its own ground.

I am not going to attempt to give an adequate answer. This whole conference, we hope, will be devoted to that—to reminding us how God is actually working in history nowadays before our eyes . . . if we will only look up and see. But there are certain facts about this modern situation

which I have described, which may help us to understand it better and clear the way for an answer.

This new situation—this closely interdependent modern world—with its close-knit system of communications, with its enormous power over nature, with its innumerable material triumphs, has not been brought into being by blind historical forces, but almost entirely by modern science. And modern science is the work, not of blind forces, but of faith and intelligence and selfless co-operation. When men talk of a co-operative commonwealth as an idle and foolish dream, they seem to forget that in the world of science it already exists. Man's increased power over nature has come about by men co-operating, across all sorts of barriers, in the increase of knowledge, in a world where men act as if they were fellow-workers —where what they discover they share—where the genius and the ordinary man help and are indispensable to one another—where the power of faith and common devotion is abundantly manifest. We students should of all people feel the force of this witness, for we shall learn little from our University life if we do not learn this sharing and co-operation in knowledge. And yet, miracle as it is, it is so obvious and so entirely taken for granted that we seldom notice it.

But how, you will ask, can modern science, if it be such a wonderful thing, have produced a world situation the plain facts of which seem to bear witness not to the power of God but to the omnipotence of a blind material system? The

answer is that we in this generation are like Peter drowning in the Sea of Galilee. He was drowning not because he had no faith. If he had had no faith, he would have stayed safely in the boat. It was having some faith but not enough—beginning well, but losing heart—that brought him to sinking. Time and again in history men by great faith do great things, and the result of their faith is to create new opportunities, new demands, new calls for more faith and redoubled energy. But sometimes those multiplied opportunities overwhelm instead of encouraging men, and then the very opportunities become new burdens and drag them down. Or worse, they forget the faith which inspired them, and turn to worshipping not the God who was the source of their inspiration, but the work of their own hands which that inspiration has brought into being and imbued with life and beauty. And then it degenerates from a beautiful instrument into a grim idol.

Clearly that is what we have done. We have let this magnificent power of organisation and mastery over nature outstrip our own power of using it, of reaching through and beyond it. We have concentrated so much on mastery over nature that we have neglected knowledge of and mastery over ourselves. We have let our system of economic relations far outstrip our power of working for common purposes. We have been deceived by what Jesus called the deceitfulness of riches. We have let ourselves be hypnotised by the work of our own hands, and have come to think of those great systems and organisations as indepen-

dent powers : we bow ourselves down before them. If we will stop worshipping them and determine to use them, we shall know them for what they are—noble instruments, but monstrous idols. The idols will fall and the power of God will manifest itself. Of this, as we shall hear in this conference, there is abundant witness. The promise of Jesus was : " where two or three are gathered together "—not where a powerful organisation has been built up, or where thousands are well drilled and disciplined, or where material forces and powers are marshalled, but " where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." God will answer prayer.

Jesus acted as he taught us to act : in the temptation he set aside the use of the ordinary powers of the world—all means of working on men in the mass. He made himself the centre of a small band of twelve. But that small band changed the face of the world as no great organisation has ever done. That is the power of fellowship. A few people who share a common purpose and know and understand one another can do miracles. They find that they are inspired by the spirit of God and can open up new ways of solving the most baffling of problems. If we are to learn to see the purpose of God in the world, we must follow the example of Jesus. We must be content to do without the powers he did without if we are to have the power he had. If we will work where we can give ourselves, where each has his own work to do and his own peculiar contribution to make, where each is inspired and strengthened by the experi-

ence and contributions of others, then we shall know what an actual evident history-making power such a fellowship can be.

In this conference we shall hear of the power that comes to men if they serve God in this spirit; and we shall know that God has not left himself without witness. We shall learn how, all over the world, the work of a few who work in this spirit is bringing about just what irreligious people do not hope for, because they do not believe it possible—what from the point of view of the irreligious are miracles. But the only way to know that God can do miracles through men is to let God do miracles through us. Let us not be content to hear, but let us determine to go home from this conference to those we know in our own small circle, and work with them in the solution of the problems immediately in front of us. This way Jesus taught to men, and by it we shall indeed know for ourselves the hope of our calling.

THE CALL TO MISSIONARY SERVICE

Mr. J. H. Oldham, M.A.,
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THE CALL TO MISSIONARY SERVICE

THE question which I have to try to answer is whether in the fulfilment of the purpose of God for the world—a purpose inconceivable and unimaginable in its grandeur, richness and variety—there is a definite vocation for some people to devote their lives to missionary service abroad. There are many people who would deny it.

The easy and naïve optimism, which leads us to suppose that Christianity, or that form of Christianity which you or I profess, may one day become the religion of the world,—is it not a dream that is possible only for those whose minds have never been opened to the real meaning of history? Is not Christianity inseparably bound up with our European civilisation and the ideas and outlook which belong to that civilisation? Can it be anything more than the way in which God is apprehended by *us*, the way in which we, being what we are, respond to God's revelation of Himself? And if this is so, must it not also be true that "other racial groups, living under entirely different cultural conditions, may experience their contact with the Divine Life in quite a different way, and may themselves also possess a religion which has grown up with them and from which they cannot sever themselves so long as they remain what they are?"

And, further, is not the attempt to convert other people to our way of thinking an unpardonable presumption ? Is it not the expression in the spiritual region of that imperialism and domination which Eastern peoples are revolting against in the political and economic fields ? Is there not implicit in the missionary enterprise an attempt to proselytise, which is incompatible with the true spirit of international fellowship and brotherhood which involves a mutual sharing and exchange ? If I set the missionary vocation before you to-day, shall I not be asking you to undertake something against which what is best in you revolts—your honest recognition of your own limitations, your generous appreciation of what is good and attractive and worthy of respect in other people ?

The answer to the difficulties which we have been considering is found in the thought which is the dominant thought of the whole Conference—the purpose of God. The missionary movement stands or falls with the truth of the conviction that the purpose of God is made fully known to us in Christ. It is not my task to vindicate the truth of the Christian view. For our present purpose we must take it for granted. It does not mean that God was revealed in Christ *exhaustively*. Nature and history are also part of this revelation. But the Christian assertion is that in Christ we have revealed the essential quality, the character, of God. The whole of life takes on a different complexion because in Christ we have found its central meaning.

If the Christian message has to do with some-

thing which God has done in history, then it is something which concerns everyone. If Christianity is true at all it is equally true for all. In carrying the Gospel to other peoples we are not asking them to substitute our way of looking at things for their own. We are asking them to gaze with us at what God has done in history, and to bring to the understanding and interpretation of those historical happenings their own distinctive gifts of insight and appreciation which they have acquired through their own cultural training and historical experiences, so that they and we may mutually enrich one another in making continually fresh discoveries of " the unsearchable riches of Christ."

If it be true that in Christ we have the clue to the inmost nature of Reality, then only on this foundation can either we or they hope to build a worthy and enduring social order. China needs to apprehend Christ and God's purpose revealed in Him if it is to create in accordance with its own distinctive gifts and capacities a true and rich life for its people, just as we need to apprehend Christ and God's purpose revealed in Him if we are to create a true and rich life for our own land.

That is one side of the argument for Christian missions. If the purpose of God is disclosed in Christ, then the peoples of Asia and Africa need to know Christ and take Him as their guide if their awakening energies are to be directed to a true goal.

But there is also the other side. We Christians in the West need the help of these peoples if

Christianity at home is to succeed in its task. We need their insight. We need their fellowship. How much help we are receiving in this Conference from our friends T. Z. Koo and S. K. Datta. I do not believe that the Churches in the West are equal to the task which confronts them even at home. They need something to lift them out of their complacency, their traditionalism, their parochialism. And I see new life coming to them. It is coming through the challenge of the world situation. It is coming through the stimulus of the younger Churches overseas. They are giving us new hope. They are giving birth to a new dream—the dream of an international Christian fellowship, comprehending the gifts of all peoples, united in a common world task and drawing strength for the conflict in the common worship of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Father of us all. The thing that more than anything else kindles my enthusiasm for the Christian missionary movement is the longing that there should be more men like Koo and Datta and K. T. Paul and Aggrey to help in the great warfare for the highest values in human life under the banner of our one Leader and Captain, Jesus Christ.

In Christianity, again, we have the answer to the difficulty about presumption, and it is, so far as I know, the only answer. Leave out the objective historical facts which are the core of Christianity, and is there not an inevitable presumption in supposing that our ideals and our convictions are higher and truer than those of other people? Knowing myself as I do, what are my ideals and

opinions worth that I should presume to offer them to others? But what we have to offer to men as Christians is not our ideals and our convictions, but Christ. As St. Paul said, "We preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus our Lord." It is true that we often fail lamentably to keep the distinction clear. Both in our thinking and in what we say we identify Christ with that infinitesimal part of His meaning which we have ourselves been able to apprehend. But however often we may fall into this mistake it remains true that what we have to communicate to others is not anything of ourselves but Christ.

The true answer, then, to the difficulty of how we, who are so imperfectly and incompletely saved ourselves, should ever presume to attempt to save others, is that we save others not by anything in ourselves, but by something in which we participate. It is not anything in us that helps or saves men, but the divine truth and goodness manifested in history, which work in and through us and touch and help other people just in proportion as we allow them to dwell in us. "I live," wrote St. Paul, "yet not I but Christ liveth in me." What is divine in the world will work in us if we will let it.

If the purpose of God for the world is revealed in its fulness in Christ, then there will be for some a vocation to give their lives to making known to men this supreme revelation of God. Every living member of a living Church is meant to be a missionary, but to some there comes the call to give their whole lives to a definitely religious ministry;

and among these to some the call to service overseas among peoples of another race.

Since Christ is concerned with the whole man, in all the rich variety in which his life expresses itself, the missionary vocation must also express itself in an endless variety of ways.

The first thing that we have to get clearly into our minds is that the missionary is the servant and builder of the indigenous Church. Perhaps the most significant thing about the meeting of the International Missionary Council at Jerusalem last year was that it marked the end of the conception of the missionary movement as an undertaking of the Churches in the West. Henceforward we must learn to think of the Church of Christ as an international fellowship facing a common world task, in the carrying out of which the older and stronger Churches in the West have the opportunity of co-operating with and helping the younger and less richly equipped Churches in Asia and Africa. In the countries where Christian missions have been at work, Christianity has become, or is rapidly becoming, indigenous. The Church has taken root in the soil. It has its own leaders. That means that the work of foreign missionaries is not to direct and control, but to be the helpers and comrades of leaders who belong to the country. And even in more backward areas, where educated leaders from among the people themselves are not yet available, the Church must always be the centre of all activity, as it is the one great hope of evangelisation.

The fact that the missionary movement has

ceased to be primarily an undertaking of the Western Churches does not mean that the contribution of those Churches is no longer needed. Remember that the overwhelming majority of the Christians in the Churches overseas are poor and lacking in educational opportunities. Educated leaders are still but a handful. Hence if these Christian communities are to progress, economically, socially and spiritually, they must receive help from outside. There is still an urgent need, as the younger Churches recognise, for the help of missionaries from the West, provided they are animated by the true spirit of comradeship. Indeed, if you will open your minds to the world situation, and think of the younger Churches, small in numbers and poor in resources, you will realise that without the releasing of new spiritual energies, without an outpouring of new devotion, without the offering of many lives, there is no hope of the Christian opportunities which present themselves on every hand being rightly seized, or of these younger Churches overseas being equipped to make that Christian contribution to the welfare and progress of the awakening peoples of Asia and Africa that is so urgently needed at the present time.

Secondly, let us think of the missionary as evangelist. That word because of many unfortunate associations may be distasteful to some of you. Yet, after all, what is a missionary if he is not first and foremost an evangelist—the bearer of good news about Christ ? Many people profess to believe in the humanitarian and educational work

of missions but not in evangelism. That is surely not a very tenable position—to commend the fruits and to condemn the tree that bears them. And in the end is not the revelation of God in Christ something very much better and greater to offer to men than our service ? How little when all is told does our service amount to, how small what it can accomplish. Are we not doing a greater thing for men if we can help them to believe that there is Love at the heart of things ? The task of the missionary is to tell a story—a story of things that happened. He has to tell the story so as to make it live, so that it never loses its eternal freshness, because the wonder of it is always fresh to his own heart—to tell it so that its beauty and heroism and adventure may make their appeal to the hearts of men. And then, since the story contains an infinitude of meaning, it is the missionary's task to unfold and interpret that meaning and to show its application to all the varied relations and situations of life. Let us dismiss from our minds all forms of evangelism which imply an attitude of superiority or betray a lack of reverence for the personality of another, or a failure to recognise that as a unique individual he must apprehend God in his own unique way. It yet remains true that to have the opportunity of telling the Christian story to a group of simple villagers, of teaching the New Testament to a class of boys or girls in school or college, to be allowed to speak of Christ in a hall packed with listening students, or in personal conversation with a friend to let the barriers of reserve fall away

and to share with him what is deepest in one's own life—these to those who have tasted them are among the richest experiences in life.

Thirdly, the Gospel has to be not only preached but lived. Christianity is not primarily a system of doctrine but a life. To be a Christian means to live the Christian life, to possess the Christian spirit. Over and over again it has been the experience of missionaries that what has impressed those whom they are seeking to serve has been not what they have said but their attitude under provocation, or the acts of service in which they have sought to manifest the Spirit of Christ. Mr. Holland quotes a remark made to him by an experienced missionary, " Your missionary work will not be to carry through your daily programme, but to take your interruptions in a Christian way."

Let me illustrate. I cannot speak at this Conference without thinking of Temple Gairdner, who died last year. He was my oldest and closest friend. We went up together to Trinity, Oxford. His life is being written by Constance Padwick and will be published in the spring. It is a book you should not miss. I will tell the story in the words of a young Mohammedan Sheikh who became a Christian, and who since then has been a devoted worker among his Moslem countrymen. He tells how in the early days of Gairdner and Thornton's work in Egypt he went into their house where discussions took place. " There for the first time," he says, " I saw Mr. Gairdner, who was greeting us all. From the first moment I was attracted ; although he did not know much Arabic, he gave

me a warm welcome. Next week I went again and Gairdner was the speaker. His subject was the divinity of Christ, and when he said, 'Behold then in Christ God Incarnate,' I was furious and rose up yelling. I soon had the room in excitement and we broke the chairs and lamps. In the midst of it I heard Gairdner say very quietly, 'the real leader in this is that little short man,' meaning me. He had a Coptic friend with him, a good man, and this friend said, 'Hadn't I better go and fetch the police?' I shall never forget how Gairdner turned round to him and called him by his name in a tone that held both friendship and horror. 'A——,' he said, 'what do we want the police here for? Don't you know that we are here for the sake of the Azhar men, and if necessary I am quite ready to take a beating from them.' My friend overheard that, and he said at once, 'If you came here for our sakes let us see if you mean what you say. Now it says in your Book that if you are struck on one cheek you should turn the other, but you won't follow that.' This he said, working himself up to anger and sure that no man so proud as an Englishman would carry it out. Instantly Gairdner strode into the middle of the room, clasped his hands behind his back and said with a charming smile, 'Come on then, my brother, strike as much as you like.' None of us could, we were so surprised to see that in an Englishman, and he looked so friendly. We stood in silence. Then he broke into a little laugh, and so did we, and he said, 'Then let us drink coffee together.'" And so the story goes on through

months that followed. The Sheikh went on going to the meetings and other talks with Gairdner and Thornton, feeling at the same time a growing bitterness against Christianity and an increasing fascination by it. As he discussed religious questions on the one hand with Gairdner and Thornton, and on the other with the teachers at the El Azhar University, what struck him was the attitude of the former—their patience, their toleration, their openness of mind and readiness for discussion. "Their courtesy and friendliness," he writes, "so attracted me that I went more and more to them."

That story might be repeated from many parts of the mission field.

Fourthly, there is the work of the missionary as educator. The immense majority of the people whom missionaries seek to serve are living in rural conditions. They are poor and backward and have the slenderest opportunities of education. That applies practically to the whole of the continent of Africa and to the great rural masses of India and China. When men and women from these countries have been won to Christ there begins the task of fostering the growth of a full Christian personality, and that involves education—the education of the whole personality. Consequently you find missionaries all over these great areas engaged in the task of village education, in training teachers for the little village schools, which are to be found as the result of missionary effort in their tens of thousands all over the continent of Africa and also in the villages of India and China. If I

had the time I am sure I could fascinate you by telling you of the inventiveness and ingenuity, of the educational skill and patience and devotion, that are being put into this work of village education by Christian workers in Asia and Africa. Those who of you are interested will find something of the story in the volume on Rural Problems in the Reports of the Jerusalem Meeting of the International Missionary Council,* if you will bring a little imagination to clothe with flesh and blood the facts that you will find recorded there.

But also among the better-educated classes Christian schools and colleges have their indispensable place in the missionary undertaking. In the national systems of education which are coming into existence in Asia and Africa the education given is for the most part secular. It may be given in an atmosphere that is definitely hostile to the Christian view of life. If the only education which is open to Christian children is one entirely dissociated from Christian ideas, so that their growing minds are formed by influences from which Christianity is entirely excluded, can we hope for the growth of strong Christian personalities capable of making an effective Christian contribution to the national life ? Christianity, if it means anything at all, is something which gives unity and meaning to the whole of life. It is not something which can be introduced as an extra into a mind shaped by an educational process based on entirely other presuppositions. If the Christian

* *The Christian Mission in Relation to Rural Problems.* Oxford University Press. 4s. 6d.

Church is to have the leaders that it needs there must be Christian schools and colleges in which the whole of the teaching is coloured and inspired by the Christian outlook and in which the pupil can grow in the atmosphere of a Christian society.

Fifthly, we may think of the missionary as the servant of society. If you will read the volume on Rural Problems, of which I have already spoken, you will find there missionaries pioneering in co-operative banks, co-operative marketing and buying, in child welfare, baby clinics, village sanitation, hygiene and health, encouraging agricultural and subsidiary industries such as poultry and silk-worm rearing, basket-making and cottage industries, and other similar activities.

But all these forms of social service, in so far as they are part of the missionary movement, are always, or ought always to be, something more than social service. It is part of the distinctive genius of Christianity to express itself in forms of bodily ministration, in the service of the sick, in the washing of feet. But these acts are always related to something that has cosmic significance. The cup of cold water is offered "in the name" of Jesus Christ. The act is the homely expression of something that belongs to the nature of Reality itself. It is this that distinguishes missionary social service from similar activities carried on by Governments or other agencies. The doctor or agriculturist in Government service, if he is a Christian, will also do his work "in the name" of his Master, as a daily offering to Christ and under His daily inspiration. But it is the distinctive task

and opportunity of the missionary to make explicit what in other activities remains to some extent implicit, the relation between these acts of love to man and that love of God for men in which they have their root.

Lastly, let us think of the missionary as adventurer. At heart he is a spiritual adventurer. He is not content with the easier, more superficial and safer methods of regenerating society. He knows that civilisation, culture, the improvement of the environment and the social sciences are all insufficient to meet the deepest needs of human life. We must change the environment in which many of our fellow human beings live. We must investigate social forces and conditions in order to control them in the interests of human welfare. But when we have done all this the real problem still remains. Interest in social reform and social research, necessary as these are, may be an excuse for evading the central problem in the improvement of human society. Christ refused to evade it. He believed, and the Christian missionary believes with Him, that the fundamental thing is the regeneration of the individual, the redemption of the whole personality through union with God—the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. On this belief he is prepared to stake his life. For it he is willing to make sacrifices. He is prepared to accept a life of comparative poverty. He is content with a much smaller salary than he may enjoy in Government service for the sake of greater freedom which he has to devote himself to his spiritual mission. He is ready to incur hardship

and risks to health. He accepts a life in which most of his days are filled with an incessant round of trivial tasks and a steady grind of dull and prosaic duties. He may have to toil for years without seeing a convert ; he may find that those whom he has watched over and prayed for fail and disappoint him. He may be called to live a life of isolation deprived of the strength and inspiration which come from fellowship with other Christians. So long as he retains the true missionary spirit he must remain a spiritual adventurer, and his watchword must be :

> Not for us the warm life of earth secure and tender
> Ours the eternal wandering and the warfare of the sea.

He is sustained in his task by the knowledge that he is fulfilling the part allotted to him in the working out of God's great plan, that he is allowed to serve in the front line of the battle, staking his life in the great adventure of faith in a divine purpose of goodness and love for the world revealed to men in Jesus Christ.

YE ARE MY FRIENDS

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YE ARE MY FRIENDS

JOHN XV, 1-17 :

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.
Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends.
These things I command you, that ye love one another.

The purpose of God in the life of the world is a web of purposes which has a single centre, from which all the threads go out and to which they all return. Only from the centre can we begin to trace the plan of it. From any other point it will seem a meaningless tangle.

Copernicus made a revolution in human knowledge merely by shifting the centre of the solar system from the earth to the sun. The world-revolution of the Christians came when Jesus discovered the true centre of human life. "Not servants but friends" is a proclamation of the revolution. The key-word of the Christian gospel is not service but friendship. Of late, I believe, we have been thinking too much in terms of service —service of God and of the world. There is nothing distinctively Christian about that. It is the natural way of religious thought when it becomes practical. Socrates called himself the servant of Apollo. Christ's revolution consisted, like that of Copernicus, precisely in denying

the "natural" point of view and substituting friendship for service.

"But, surely," you will say, "we are called as Christians to serve Christ and to serve the world." No! we are called to be the friends of Christ and the friends of men. That is not at all the same thing. Friendship often looks like service from the outside. So long as we stand on the earth, the earth going round the sun will look like the sun going round the earth. But when we take our stand at the centre of life with Jesus, the whole landscape is altered and service is swallowed up in friendship.

There is only one way to get the difference between service and friendship clear, and that is by discovering it in our own experience. No one can do that for us. But I can perhaps suggest certain lines which you may follow in exploring your own experience. In the first place, then, the standpoint of service is bound up with the idea of duty, and in friendship duty disappears. Duty, in fact, fades right out of the picture in the Christian view of life. Suppose a friend came to see you when you were ill, would you be satisfied to know that he came because it was his duty to come? Would you not rather feel that the one thing needful was lacking? In friendship the personal things—warmth and intimacy of feeling—must be the springs of action. The cold impersonality of obligation is unprofitable. We shall not then be surprised by the quaintness of Christ's treatment of the idea of duty. "So likewise ye, when ye have done *all* those things which are

commanded you, say, 'We are unprofitable servants: we have only done that which it was our duty to do.'" Only our whole duty! and Jesus calls that unprofitable service! It is because his view of life begins where duty ends, because Christian relationships are all intimate personal relationships. To fall short of that is to miss the one thing needful.

Self-sacrifice is another idea which clings about the thought of service but has no real place in Christ's view of life. He loved life and hated death. He thought that self-sacrifice was necessary sometimes, never that it was good. He said that the way to save your life was to lose it, never that there could be any value in losing it. There, indeed, lies the precise difference between Christianity and Buddhism. There have been martyrs who embraced death for their cause with joy. Jesus was not one of them. It was with a desperate resolution that "he set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem." In Gethsemane he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me." As He died, He cried, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" It was Jesus who said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." He was the great lover of life. It was Jesus, not Nietzsche, who said, "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." He suffered and died, not to teach us to suffer and to die, but that we might live. He sacrificed Himself, not to teach us to sacrifice ourselves, but to make "one sacrifice for sins once for

all," and the writer to the Hebrews goes on to draw the obvious conclusion, " There remaineth therefore now no more sacrifice for sins for ever." Our own experience of friendship, and perhaps that alone, can throw a light into these depths. The more deep and real our friendships become, the more what looks like sacrifice from the outside is found to be the free and spontaneous expression of our own soul's necessity. If you discovered that a picture you had bought for an old song in a country curio shop was a priceless Old Master it would be ludicrous to say that you had *sacrificed* five shillings for it. In a perfect friendship, however, the word sacrifice is not merely ridiculous, it is just meaningless. In such a relationship what looks like giving what I value most is really getting what I most desire : the losing is the saving.

The fact is that in friendship we are beyond law and obedience, beyond rules and commandments, beyond all constraint, in a world of freedom. But did not Jesus say, " Ye are my friends *if* ye do whatsoever I command you." Yes, he did. We, on our side, are apt to miss the quiet humour of his paradoxes. " These are my commandments," he goes on, " that ye love one another." In other words, the friendship of Christ is realised in our friendships with one another. His command is that we rise above commandments, and therefore his obedience is perfect freedom. Make service your centre, with its laws and duties and self-sacrifices, and life is a bondage. Make friendship the centre and life is freedom.

We are here at the heart of the Christian

revolution. Christianity is the religion of friendship. The measure of our Christianity is the reality and depth of our friendship with men and women. Neither knowledge nor beauty nor goodness can save or satisfy a single soul. Only friendship can do it. Friendship is the supreme value in life, and the source of all other values. The others are only moons that reflect the light of friendship. If their sun is darkened, they, too, will disappear in the blackness that covers the world.

Do you think that this is too simple and easy? Simple it is, perhaps, but not easy. There is nothing that we fear more than friendship, nothing that strikes more terror into us than freedom. If this seems a strange saying, it must be because you are confusing friendship with friendliness. Friendliness is not to be despised, but it is only the imitation of friendship, and a poor substitute for the real thing. It is really a refined form of service, and often a rather superficial one. But friendship knows no reservations. It gives, not sympathy or comfort, or advice or help, but itself. To be a friend is to be yourself for another person. It means committing yourself completely and revealing yourself without reserve. It means putting all your cards on the table and taking all the consequences. It means stark reality between persons without pretence or sentimentality. How many of us could bear to be found out completely for what we are by someone else? Most of us shrink from finding ourselves out. Even with our intimates we wear a mask, and insist upon their wearing one. We

have tastes and decencies and dignities that we must defend, and all of them are defences against friendship. They are the life-belts that keep us on the surface of that sea of intimate relations, and we cling to them in terror of drowning in the limitless depths of personality. So pretence creeps in and sentimentality, the grossest sin of all against friendship. Honest hatred is better than the pretence of love. There are amongst us those who are willing to spend time and thought and strength and money in the service of others in order to retain the isolation of our own personality, to conceal, as it were, the fraud we are guilty of in refusing to give ourselves. All that service is of no avail. What men need from us is love, not loving acts; friendship, not friendly services. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not friendship, it profiteth me nothing" —just nothing. Friendship means losing ourselves, and that is apt to be a terrifying experience.

It is to this dedication of themselves to friendship that the followers of Christ are called. Those who have the courage so to lose themselves discover with an ever-recurring surprise that in losing themselves they find themselves, and freedom. All of us know something of the freedom that comes—the tranquillity and self-realisation that comes—when we slip from the company of strangers into the companionship of our intimate friends. Some restraint that caged us up inside ourselves is removed. We have no longer to keep up appearances. Our real selves can flow out to

these others freely, and in giving ourselves we find ourselves. The ray that illuminates and warms us in these moments, however faint it may be, comes straight from the Light of the World. The purpose of God in the life of the world is simply the spreading and deepening of that experience until it covers the whole earth.

The praise of friendship is not peculiar to Christianity. The uniqueness of Christ's gospel is that it makes friendship the heart of life, the absolute to which all else is relative. The Kingdom of Service is an infinitely distant ideal which calls for the sacrifice of life to the hope of Utopia. But Christ's kingdom, the kingdom of friendship, is no distant dream that can only come true

> When the war-drums throb no longer and the battle-flags are furled,

but a present reality. So when the Pharisees asked him when the kingdom of God should come, Jesus could answer, "They shall not say, 'Lo here!' or 'Lo there!' for the Kingdom of God is among you."

FRIENDSHIP AS THE STANDARD FOR HUMAN RELATIONSHIP

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FRIENDSHIP AS THE STANDARD FOR HUMAN RELATIONSHIP

The subject on which I am to speak to-day has a searchingly personal quality : it challenges everybody, privately and relentlessly : it knocks at the secret places of every heart. If the Christian assumption is true—that God's glorious and eternal purpose for this Universe is revealed in His Son—its implicit logic is summed up in one tremendous sentence, " Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." If in Jesus Christ we have the very mind and act of God, Love is the fulfilling of His Law ; friendship has to be the guiding principle for human life in all its relationships ; and not until there is fellowship in Christ—between race and race, nation and nation, class and class, man and man—all middle walls of partition being broken down, all caste prejudices and cherished snobberies put away—can Christ begin to have the pre-eminence in all things, and be " everything and everywhere."

1. Friendship—the World's deep Need.

What God offers in Christ is precisely what the world is perishing for lack of : there is " a famine of love throughout the world " ; amid the war-

rings of our time—racial, national, industrial—to labour this point would be to thresh straw. The ablest and most far-seeing minds all over the world are saying that we have to discover the way of conciliation between men or our civilisation will collapse : it cannot survive otherwise. I think of André Siegfried's book, *America comes of Age*, where he concludes his stark chapter on the colour question in the southern States with the words :

> The race problem is an abyss from which we shrink back in horror.

I think of the verdict of one of the most eminent of modern historians, Rostovstev, who ends his brilliant study of the social and economic life of the Roman Empire by saying :

> *Our* civilisation will not last unless it be a civilisation not of one class, but of the masses,

i.e., unless the problem of reality is seen to be at bottom one of personal relationships.

And I think, but need not speak of what even the professional soldiers are saying about a world still organised and organising for war : armaments mean disaster, because war—of a scientific savagery yet undreamed of—is bound to come sooner or later where the conditions of that war exist. To put it at its lowest, the world's practical philosophy of human relationship is not only barbarous, it is dangerous ; unless we can adopt and live by another philosophy, we are at our extremity. Friendship is the world's deep need.

II. What Friendship Means.

We all know. It is something within the experience of us all. No one here to-night is friendless—without deep love for somebody : a mother, a father, a man or a woman. Even the solitary are set in families. We all have friends. And if we think about friendship as we know it, we see that three things are true about it.

(i) *Friendship is always mutual.* It is not enjoyed—indeed, it does not exist—until it is returned as well as given. It is never patronage—your splendid condescension to somebody else's felt insufficiency. As it takes two to quarrel, it takes two to touch the glory of friendship. Let me confess that I am not a friend of Mr. Bernard Shaw. Why ? I admire him very much. I like him. But he doesn't admire me. He doesn't know me and doesn't want to. But friends meet face to face, look one another in the eyes : their smile is eloquent of a precious thing shared : they gladly give themselves away to one another. And that is what friendship means. The difference between a friend and an acquaintance is that to the one you open your very heart, and to the other you do not. And so, in the second place :

(ii) *Friendship is built on respect for Human Personality.* There is no trace of contempt in it ; there is no desire for mastery in it, that secret love of ordering other people about, the desire for power, which hides deep down even in the best of us. You cannot be top-dog and friend to the same person. Friendship means holding that other

personality sacred, respecting it as such. Friendship is not possible under any lower conditions. As Mr. Clive Bell put it recently in his essay on Civilisation :

> Never to the overbearing and underbred are we tempted to betray our dearest secrets. That is why the cad, the bounder, the bully, the mistrustful wiseacre and the self-assertive superman shove or slink through life without tasting it ; all their contacts are one-sided ; a man with hooks at the end of his arms can sometimes catch you by the ankle and bring you down, but never can he know the thousand curious thrills of giving a caress, or taking the pressure of a hand.

The *foundation* of friendship is respect for personality.

(iii) In the third place, *Friendship is always sacrificial.* It costs something. " Gratitude," said Gibbon drily, " is expensive." Well, so is friendship. You have to give in order to get it : if I am utterly self-centred I can never know it. One of the loveliest things in life is the exquisite thrill of being allowed to suffer for those you verily love : and that is one of friendship's hall-marks.

III. What Friendship Means when lifted up into the Light of God's Purpose in Christ.

If some of you are feeling, " Aye, there's the rub," I think you are right. Are we prepared to extend all this, to widen the area of its application —so that from being friends merely with those of our own set and taste, *our* class, *our* country, *our*

colour—we go on to learn of Christ, putting away all contempt for those outside this select circle, and seeking true friendship with all sorts and conditions? I hope you saw the picture in *Punch* some time ago of a little boy being reproved by his father for having been beaten in a school examination by "a mere girl." The little boy replies: "But, papa, I don't think girls are as *mere* as they used to be." And when we have seen the glory on the face of Jesus Christ, which is the glory of God, is anyone any longer *mere*? A "nigger," a native boy in Kenya, a Lascar in Liverpool to-night, a servant girl washing up in the scullery to-night, a "Chink," a Jew, a "hand" in the nearest factory? Are they "mere"? And the question can become more intimate and searching than that. In college, how easily we let ourselves agree to recognise the "duds" as such: in the common ways of life how lightly we judge such and such as "rabbits." Yet the Bible has a pertinent word even about that: "The conies are a feeble folk, *but* their home is in the rock"; which simply means that God *is* their father, and that the "rabbits" of our experience *are* the brothers for whom Christ died, whether we like it or not. God is no respecter of persons, simply because respect of persons implies disrespect of personality, and that is never the Divine way, if it is true that God has spoken to us in Christ. Jesus is Master and Lord, but it is a mastership not after the fashion of the world. The most remarkable thing about the mastership of Jesus is that He never insists on being master; He treats us not as

puppets, but as persons; He comes to us not as an over-riding force, but as a friend; He will not command us as His slaves; He calls us as His brethren. "If you love me," He says, "you will keep my commandments"; and that is the end of it.

The question is: Can you and I put ourselves in line with the Divine purpose for humanity, casting out all contempt for others—of whatever people or kindred or tongue they may be—because we see that contempt is not only barbarous and even dangerous, but because it is utterly incompatible with the mind and act of Christ? It is not easy: it will cost us much, all we have and all that God will give us. It means disabusing our hearts of many deep-seated prejudices. "God is not an Englishman ten feet high," said Huxley. We have to ask ourselves whether we realise that. Christ is not "a sahib booted and spurred with fork and spoon from Birmingham." If Jesus Christ is Lord, your pet aversions, the people you really despise, the people whom you casually ignore and so hurt, the landlady of your rooms, the man at the booking office from whom you get your ticket and whom you don't know from Adam, the Socialist it may be, or it may be the Die-hard, niggers, "damned niggers," and even publicans and sinners—all are loved of God with an utter and everlasting love.

In the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, nothing less than friendship—based on a profound respect for human personality everywhere—is really good

enough for this world which God has made for Himself.

IV. How is such Friendship to come and be Regulative for Human Life everywhere?

Well, how do unachieved ideals come true? Do they not begin at home, in the lonely human heart, like all the fruits of the spirit? Those fruits—gentleness, self-control—spring from roots in individual lives. The Divine purpose can and will only be accomplished through the individual: God waits for your dedicated life and mine to be the leaven of society all about us: it is His good pleasure to give the Kingdom through you and others like you: the way to the Divine society is the way of individual discipleship.

That seems to me the most terrifying thought of all—God needing our discipleship! And though others will speak more fully of this fundamental and primary thing, let me mention it—this one thing needful—in conclusion.

Discipleship is never just imitating Christ: it is not morality, making the Sermon on the Mount into a mountainous ethic to be painfully climbed. That way spells failure, as all will confess who have done that pathetically futile thing—made a New Year's resolution! Resolving to lift ourselves by our own belts is only the prelude to failure: the native hue of resolution has a way of fading soon after January 1st, has it not? Religion, which is deeper far than morality, means man's willingness to receive rather than to earn his salvation:

it means being reconciled to God first that we may be reconciled to man afterwards: it means a life hid with Christ in God.

The urge to friendship fails if there is no gospel behind it, no word about supernatural grace stealing into the holy of holies of human personality and succouring it. "Little children, love one another," says John, "because love is of God." It is the man-made, self-sufficient friendship that fails in the day of crisis.

I don't know who is responsible for the facile lines:

> Just the art of being kind
> Is all the sad world needs.

But they beg the question entirely. Just that art of being kind is just the problem.

We can only be reconciled to one another when we are reconciled to God, when there merges in us *a new level of experience*. "Something happens when Christ touches men": just *what* it is none can define, but for nineteen centuries saints, apostles, prophets and martyrs have testified that it is real beyond telling.

Men and women—you who look for the secret of the art of life and would verily know God and live in Him and give your life into His keeping—the longed-for secret is this, that we should know Him in Jesus Christ whom He has sent. And perhaps the highest point to which we can ever attain in this life is when we come to say—all fruitless quest and endless argument abandoned—

> This is a very strange thing: but it is TRUE.

THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL TO KNOW GOD

The Rev. Canon Spanton,
Secretary of the Universities' Mission to Central Africa

THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL TO KNOW GOD

We are trying in this Conference to see God's purpose in the Life of the World. We have learned already that the keynote of this purpose is friendship. God calls us to be His friends, and because He calls us to be His friends, He calls us to be fellow-workers with Him in the world, for the world, and we must have thought what a tremendous responsibility this friendship, which makes us workers with God, thrusts upon us. The Lord Christ said : " Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." And yet it must have occurred to many of us that in one way He seems to show even a greater love in that He commits to us, His friends, so weak, so unworthy of such a commission, His purpose, Himself. And then we have gone on to think that this friendship to which God calls us leads us inevitably to friendship with men, and we thought last night of what that involves, when the world needs this friendship never more perhaps than in this our day. It is only this friendship, the friendship of men proceeding from, going with the friendship of God which can produce the international relationships, the inter-racial relationships, the industrial relationships for which we look and long. And so we come to see that this friendship is a great and tremendous thing. It is, it always must

be, mutual. It demands giving as well as getting. It demands sacrifice ; it is to be not passive, but passionate.

But this friendship with God producing this friendship with man, to what does it lead ? Many would be tempted to say that the first inevitable exercise of this friendship is service. You must serve your friend, but I would suggest that before this friendship with God can lead to service that will be effectual, it must be exercised in the life of prayer. If we are to be the friends of God and advance in this true friendship day by day, we must be men and women of prayer, because prayer —how often have we said it and how slow we are to learn it !—is not just asking God to do things for us. It is certainly not just trying to bend God's will to ours, but it is the practice of intimacy as friend with friend, and as we exercise our intimacy in prayer, we come to know Him, to advance in that knowledge, which is eternal life.

Human friendship must begin in knowledge, and yet human friendship must lead to knowledge. How often we have echoed the truth of the words of that rugged old philosopher, who, walking down the street, turned to his companion and pointing to a man who was passing, said : " I hate that man." And his companion answered : " How can you hate him ? You don't know him." And he replied : " That's why I hate him. If I knew him I could not hate him."

We have had impressed upon us that most vital distinction between friendship and friendliness. Friendliness is very largely a matter of tempera-

ment. With some people it is easy to be friendly, with others it is difficult. But we can all be friends. Friendliness is possible towards strangers, but friendship is only possible to those whom we come to know. We feel that is all true, and yet we realise that it is equally true that only as we practise friendship, do we come to know them our friends.

And so with our friendship with God. As we advance in friendship, as we practise intimacy in prayer, we advance in the knowledge of Him.

Then next, though this saying is not on the surface a popular one, friendship involves discipline. We are told that this age is impatient of discipline. This age is impatient of most things—it is in a hurry not only when it drives its motors, but to put straight the crookednesses of the world, to remedy its injustices and to bring in the Kingdom of God on earth. The age is impatient, but not specially impatient of discipline. It is impatient of restrictions with which it cannot sympathise, which it does not understand, which seem to it unnecessary. But a life of discipline is not a restricted life. It is a life of fulness and a life of freedom. We were told yesterday morning that our friendship with the Lord Jesus Christ must lead us " to follow Him, and to follow Him, and to follow Him," to the Cross, to the Tomb. That is what I mean when I say that our friendship involves discipline. It does not involve what people often think discipline means, just the performance of a number of uncongenial duties, or the keeping of a number of awkward rules. But it involves the real true prayer

from the heart, which so often comes from our lips, that God's will may be done. I remember once I heard an old woman who had just passed through a big sorrow, say : " Well, I suppose we must submit, for it's the Lord's will." This discipline of which I speak, which friendship involves, is no spirit of feeble submissiveness to a relentless fate, but one of whole-souled passionate desire for the fulfilment of the purpose of our Father. And so it sets us free from the fetters of self-will and selfishness in all its forms and leads us to a life that is full and free.

Then this friendship with God, developed through prayer, drawing us to a true knowledge of Him who has called us to be His friends, inducing in us that spirit of discipline and service which delights in sacrifice, must lead us to the thought of God's purpose for the life of each one here. If God has admitted me to His friendship and called me to be His fellow-worker in fulfilling His purpose for the world, He has a job for me which it is my business to find, as soon as I can, and to fulfil with all my might. It may be that God calls you to care for hurt bodies, or to train men's minds. He will call some of you to devote yourselves more particularly to their souls. Some He is calling to serve Him in industry, some in administration. Your job in life may be very little or enormously big. But be sure that it is God's purpose for you. It is an essential part of His purpose for the world, and in the fulfilling of it you will prove yourself His friend.

Some years ago we had come to the end of our college year in our college in Zanzibar. The ex-

aminations were over, and the students were going home, and I asked one young man who had just gained a pretty brilliant certificate, what he was going to do with his life ; he said he was going to teach in one of the little village missionary schools. I asked him why he was not going to devote himself to some other job that would bring him more money and give him greater opportunity of using his gifts. He said, so simply, yet so sincerely : "A few years ago I was in the darkness, and God sent His light to me, and I believe now that He is calling me to carry that light to my brothers who are in the darkness still, and so I must answer my call."

That is true of every one of us. We must answer our call. God's purpose may call us to live in a slum that the slum may be sweeter for our having lived in it : or what is perhaps more difficult, to live in a smug suburban street ; or it may call us to leave home and kindred and to go for His sake to the ends of the earth. To a humble life or to a life of high adventure ; to a sheltered life, or to a life of difficulty and daring and strain and stress. But our truest happiness and our greatest usefulness will be found along the way that God calls us. That is for us the life of fulness because it is the life for which we were made, and happy is he who finds his job while he stands on the threshold of life, who before too many years have been wasted hears God's call above the conflicting voices of the world, and who takes his road with gay and gallant determination, firm in the confidence of His friendship, who is eternal life because He is eternal love.

THE DEDICATION OF THE MIND

The Archbishop of York

THE DEDICATION OF THE MIND

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind." Probably Christians have given less attention to this injunction than to any of the rest of what is gathered up in the two great Commandments. Much effort has been given to developing the love of God in heart and soul and strength, if by that we mean in emotion, in will and in moral or physical energy; and much attention has been given to working out the love of neighbour as of self, however far short Christians have come in all these respects when judged by the ideal standards of the Gospel. But the mental love of God has hardly been developed at all. Of course there is the whole edifice of Christian Theology, but that is a specialist department; to work out a Theology is perhaps the most obvious of all the ways of loving God with the mind, but it is not the only one that exists, though it is the only one that has been systematically pursued.

If we try to set out in order what obedience to this command must mean, no doubt the first place must be given to the duty of thinking out as thoroughly as possible our conception of God in the light of His revelation of Himself in Christ; that is Theology. There has been a great abundance of work in this field, but it has been in con-

stant peril of becoming over-specialist. The two great Commandments stand together, and we must not so obey one as to ignore the other. If theologians are to love their neighbours as themselves in addition to loving God with all their minds, they must recognise a duty to the public. There is a widespread belief that Theology is an unpopular subject ; but that is a complete delusion. Theology in its proper sense of " thinking about God " is the most popular subject that exists. Masses of evidence can be quoted in support of that contention. But in this as in other subjects the specialist tends to get immersed in the technicalities and minutiæ of the study, which are extremely interesting to those whose knowledge is far advanced, but to no one else. We desperately need more competent thinkers to deal in lectures and writings with the broad outlines of the Christian conception of God and of life, and to do it in the language of ordinary intelligent people. Thus, for example, most thoughtful people are really eager to understand more fully that Figure which is on any showing the most influential in history ; but to warn them against Nestorianism on the one side and Monophysitism on the other leaves them unenlightened ; their understanding is not helped and their patience is strained.

No doubt the public is often rather unintelligent in this matter. It allows scientists to be as technical as they like, and it refuses to respect a psychologist unless he has devised a jargon which makes him unintelligible even to other psychologists; but it is impatient at the bare notion that

technical theology should exist at all. But this is only the thoughtless reaction of a deep and perfectly sound conviction that religion is in a special sense every man's affair, and that while we are ready to believe anything about atoms or electrons which the pundits tell us, we cannot believe anything about God and our own souls except so far as we can ourselves perceive in some degree its meaning and its bearing on our lives. Technical theology must go on ; it is only the effort to think with scrupulous exactitude about the greatest of all problems ; but we must demand of theologians that they also keep sufficiently in touch with ordinary folk to present the broad outlines of their study in the language that ordinary folk can understand.

With theology, and as a part of it, must be placed Christian ethics and sociology. We are just beginning again to do what classical theology regarded as an evident part of its function, and to think out again what is really involved, for individual conduct and for the ordering of social life, in the belief that Jesus Christ is the manifestation of the ultimate Reality. And we must call upon Christians who are economists, or economists who are Christians, to show us the bearing of our faith upon the problems of social life.

But theology in all its branches starts from the acceptance of the revelation given in Christ and seeks to articulate what is there learnt or to apply it in other fields. There is another dedication of Mind which Christians have been less ready to encourage.

The student of Science must come to his task with no preconceptions. His way of loving God with his mind is to study the works of God with a mind receptive of all facts but free from all initial prejudice from whatever source derived. This is the only way to be scientific ; but it is also the only way to be truly reverent. To come to the study of the works of God with a preconception of what they must turn out to be is a species of idolatry ; it is the setting up of an image of God instead of accepting from God the evidence of His own works.

But in Science itself the problem is not acute ; such difficulties as seem to arise are mainly due to excursions on the part of scientists into the realm of philosophy, or of religionists into the realm of Science, without the necessary equipment. Some scientists have that equipment, and most important work is now being done by men whose approach to the problems of philosophy is mainly by way of the natural sciences. In those sciences themselves the way for the Christian is clear because they are concerned only with Facts and not at all with Values, and the Facts must be ascertained by strict application of scientific method. In Art this is different. And here I wish to urge the claim that the Christian view of life must for Christians determine the forms taken by Art. This is not to say that Art should handle only religious subjects, but that it should in the handling of all subjects aspire to the expression of that combination of sympathy and purity which is the unique Christian attitude towards the world of

sense. Christians must learn to recognise Art as essentially an activity of the Divine Spirit in Man ; but it can only be regarded as truly divine when it is in harmony with the Spirit of Christ, for He is at once the source and the exemplar of the Divine Spirit. Perhaps nothing would just now so much aid the permeation of life with Christian principles as a revival of true Christian art—truly artistic and truly Christian.

One branch of Art is so widely influential as to call for special mention. Literature is in these days a factor of incalculable importance. We have reached a stage where it would appear that the pundits of literature regard the acceptance of any specific revelation as a confession of weakness. The review of Mr. T. S. Eliot's last volume of essays in *The Times Literary Supplement* is a symptom, perhaps a portent. The reviewer holds that a gulf is now fixed between Mr. Eliot and himself because Mr. Eliot accepts the Christian revelation. To base himself on that instead of on " the deepest personal experience " is held to be an abdication. Now that argues a definite deification of pride or self-centredness. Whether or not a revelation has been given is open to dispute ; but if it has in fact been given, how can it be the mark of inferior genius to accept it ? It cannot be wrong to be right ! Why should not a man's acceptance of, and response to, a Divine self-revelation in a Person be as deep a personal experience as his response to the Divine Self-Revelation in Nature or in History generally ? For all experience is a response to something. And the æsthetic

quality of a literary work does not depend on the extent to which the artist received his material from without, for there is and can be none which he does not so receive ; it depends on the extent to which in receiving it he has really made it his own. Our great need is writers of artistic gifts who will seek to make their own the Christian revelation, and then set it before us recreated by the vividness of their experience. But that very vividness of experience is a snare, for it ministers to self-importance and to an unwillingness to accept the spiritual discipline of seeking to appropriate what at first may seem remote. Hence, as I suppose, springs the attitude of mind which takes it for granted that an artist has abdicated his lofty claim because he has found truth where saints and sages also found it before him.

Similarly we need, and more than all else we need, Christian philosophers—men who will work out the whole Christian World-view, having full regard alike to the revelation in Christ and to the facts of experience and the currents of contemporary thought. There have been times when the whole framework of thought and the whole background of action has been provided by Christian conviction. To achieve this becomes harder in every generation, because the volume of knowledge steadily grows, and the area to be surveyed is greater and more complicated. But the need is as great as ever, and we must call men, and set ourselves to meet it in all sincerity.

For of course in all Dedication of the Mind sincerity is the first requirement. And here

especially we must frankly recognise the reality of risk. For if such thinking is not truly free, it will be valueless ; and if it is free it may tend to conclusions that are regretted. To discard lightheartedly what saints and sages have found so precious is foolish presumption ; and if you can lose your faith without regret it only proves that the faith you had was not worth keeping. But even a loyal disciple of Christ has to pass through searching discipline if he is also to be loyal to truth. Do not shirk that risk, great and awful as it is. In days of bewilderment, be quite relentless in the maintenance of your intellectual integrity ; follow the argument where it leads. But all the time maintain also your religious practice, your prayers, your Bible reading, your meditation, your communion. The light you need to solve your problem may come through them. Never let them go unless or until it would seem to be sheer hypocrisy to persist in them, which can only be if you really become convinced that your religious faith is baseless. But even the risk of that must be faced in our loyalty to truth. We must solemnly recognise that loss of faith may be the price that has to be paid for the ultimate winning of deeper truth, just as the sense of dereliction by God was part of what Christ must pass through to win the joy that was set before Him, the joy of a world by Him redeemed from selfishness to love.

You may think that I have been speaking about what we want other people to do for us. You do not conceive yourselves to be persons of genius in science or art or philosophy ; and therefore you

may think you have no part in this matter. But genius is only the focal expression of a common mind ; and that common mind is what we all help to make it. To you, and to each of you, the call comes to dedicate your mind. Perhaps you are studying theology ; then take care to keep in touch with the views of ordinary people, and train yourself to be able to put the truths you reach before them so that they can appreciate their importance.

Perhaps you are studying history ; then read it with an eye open to see the workings of God's judgments in its course.

Perhaps you are studying science ; then study it as the investigation of the way in which God has fashioned and guides His world.

Perhaps you are studying art or literature, and whether you are studying them or not, you ought to be trying to enjoy them. But study or enjoy them with faculties illuminated by fellowship with Christ.

But in all things be honest with yourself. Do not profess to find Christ where in fact you have not found Him. Do not suppose that you believe what you have only heard said by other people. Seek to know what you truly think, even while ready, perhaps desirous, to change your mind if the evidence allows. Give respect to the weight of authority, but do not let acceptance on authority be final. Seek always to be able to say to those whose authority you have trusted, " Now we believe, not because of thy saying ; for we have heard Him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world." Retain at all costs the

sacred freedom of your minds. In your studies, in your discussions, in your plans for yourselves or your college or the world, you are to think your hardest, and as far as you can freely, yet as those who have seen Jesus and have at the lowest realised that our thought about the world has to account for Him ; and if it may be so—if you can do it honestly and sincerely—then think your hardest and still freely, yet as those who have known Jesus and are sure that all sound thinking must be illumined by the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which you have found, and know that you have found, in Him.

THE OFFERING OF LIFE

THE BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL

THE OFFERING OF LIFE

You have been exercising your minds upon a variety of subjects, a variety so great that you may well confess at the moment to a certain degree of bewilderment. That is the first effect of every Conference such as this, and it need not surprise you. But there is a clear line of thought along which you have been led, clearer I think in this than in most Conferences I have known. And one of its effects upon you will soon, I believe, be equally clear.

I want to suggest that if this Conference has done nothing else for you it has helped to magnify, to glorify, and in some respects to change your conception of God. If so it has brought you into a movement of contemporary thought quite full, as I believe, of hope and promise for the future of religion. It seems to me that when we of this generation look round upon the world, as you have been looking, and then out into the prospect of God's purpose therein, almost everything depends upon a new understanding on our part of God Himself. Our vision of God must greaten with our greatening vision of His world. In times past there have often been people who have tried to face a new world with an old idea of God who made and is still making it, and they have always failed.

Why is it so difficult in these days to reach that new understanding, to make it our own, to let Him grow in our growing minds, in the Bible word to "magnify" Him? I don't know whether your experience has been like mine, but here is my difficulty. I find that, like many other people, I started with the conception of a Person of unlimited power and inexorable will. I knew that men, including myself, are in continual rebellion against that will, that sooner or later they must pay the penalty for that rebellion, because sooner or later God's power will vindicate itself and His will be done. In the meantime there He stands in the back of our minds, outside and immeasurably above ourselves, unimaginably great, aloof, and on the whole forbidding.

With that preconception I study Christ and His idea of God, the idea He proclaimed by what He said and did, having in Himself that which He proclaimed. I know that in Him this great and distant figure has become approachable by me. Therefore I try to adjust the Father as Christ brings Him with the God that still looms in the background of my thinking. But the two do not fit. Always there are clashes between them.

There is only one thing I can do about it. I must go on studying the *mind* of Christ, what He thinks about the world and me, for that and nothing else is God's mind. I must contemplate the *character* of Christ, the motives of His dealings with the world and me, for that and nothing else is God's character. I must recognise the *methods* of Christ's activity then and now, for these and no

others are the eternal methods of God. If there persists in me any idea about God which conflicts with that mind, that character, those methods, then that idea must go. Perhaps it was a stepping-stone to a more perfect idea, perhaps it had work to do in the world and in me at a certain stage, but in a further stage of growth I must grow out of it.

I spoke of clashes. Here is an obvious one. "Behold the Lord God will come as a mighty one, and his arm shall rule for him." Compare that with this: "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And again: "I stand at the door and knock." I stand—waiting; all the power and glory not abandoned, but transmuted into Love. And, as always, the greater the love, the deeper the patience and the humility. Have we found room in our thought of God for this divine constraint that forbids Him to force Himself upon the soul of any man? Does that fit in with our normal reaction to the word "God"? Yet that *is* God, knocking at the door of the world.

There are some who have heard that knocking. Many of you have heard it. "We see thee not, we watch, we wait; we think we hear thee at the gate—" This week, if never before, you have heard Him at the gate. Why is it worth while for Him to stand there outside, only just outside, and wait? What does He seek? He seeks you. What for? To save you from perdition? Yes, but for more than that. He did not make us merely for deliverance, He made us for Himself, because He needs us. I know that to some it seems hardly right, hardly reverent, to speak of God as standing

in need—of us. But it seems to me that there are points in our thinking towards Him where conviction is rightly impatient of theological exactitude. I know that I am using feeble human words (misleading words, it may be, for all words may mislead) in regions where the use of any words can carry us but a little way. Yet how else can we represent in thought and word God's feeling towards ourselves? "God so loved the world——" Does not Love always trust and always need? We look round upon the world of men, upon the multitudes that know Him not. It is not enough to say "they need God." We shall never evangelise the world until we fully know that God needs them, that he may build them into the Body of His Son. We look into ourselves, and we dare to say: "Bad as we know ourselves to be, God has need of us." Then we can never despair of ourselves or of each other. And I believe it is true to say that he knows best his need of God who best knows God's need of him.

Look once more at God in Christ. Look away for the moment from His miracles and even from His sufferings and death. Consider an activity which bulked more largely in His ministry than (till recently) was realised by most of us. It was the teaching and training of those friends of His who had ears to hear His call and were offering Him, without fully understanding all that was involved, their lives. We have yet a great deal to learn about that training. When we have learned it, I believe it will revolutionise our own teaching and training. But we have begun. Some of you

will remember how it is sketched in Part III of the Sixth World Call Report. The study has been carried further in Canon Raven's book, *Christ and Modern Education*. For the moment think of Christ devoting Himself to the training of the men He needed to continue all that He began both to do and to teach. That is God.

A new conception of God at work in the world. Do you see how it involves and demands a new conception of ourselves as fellow-workers with Him ? Put those two conceptions together. We can understand with our minds that they fit. Together they make sense of the world and ourselves and many puzzling things in both. Yet there is need of something more than an explanation. Only love can fuse these two conceptions into a *working* philosophy of life that satisfies not reason only, but the whole man.

" Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength." *With all thy heart*—the force of our desires making its way through many mediate objects of desire to Him who is over all, through all, in all. *With all thy soul*—i.e. all that is alive in us, our vital faculties of seeing, speaking, hearing, moving exercised towards Him. *With all thy mind* —that is what you have been doing. You have been preparing for this week by much exercise of the mind. And then here you have let yourselves be drawn along these many channels of thought and imagination towards God, the living God, alive in the world life of to-day, and quietly and patiently waiting for you to work with Him ;

waiting, that is, for you to love Him *with all your strength*. Have you not been conscious of this waiting ? As you have contemplated the world's need, which is God's need, you have not sought God's purpose impersonally as spectators from outside. You could not do that if you tried. For you are in it. You are part of it. God's purpose in the life of the world, that I can see. But there is a part in that purpose reserved for me. No one else can take that part. Unless I make it mine it must drop out. What is it ? That is the question which this week has been asking of you. God waits to-night to hear you answer it.

APPENDIX

British Universities and Colleges Represented

* Both men and women represented.
† Women only represented.

ENGLAND

Bedford :
Froebel Training College †

Bingley :
Training College †

Birkenhead :
St. Aidan's

Birmingham :
Carey Hall
College of the Ascension
Fircroft College
Handsworth College
Kingsmead *
Overdale College *
University *
Westhill *
Woodbrooke *
Y.W.C.A. College †

Bradford :
College of Art
Congregational College

Brecon :
Memorial College

Brighton :
Diocesan Training College †
Municipal Day Training College †

Bristol :
Baptist College
University *
Western College *

Burgh :
St. Paul's

Cambridge :
Cheshunt College
Girton †
Homerton Training College †
Newnham †
Ridley Hall

Cambridge (cont.):
Training College †
University
Wesley House
Westcott House
Westminster College

Canterbury:
St. Augustine's

Cheltenham:
St. Mary's Hall †
St. Paul's College
The Priory †

Cheshunt:
Bishop's College

Chichester:
Bishop Otter College †
Theological College

Crewe:
Training College †

Darlington:
Training College †

Durham:
Neville's Cross Training College †
University *

Ely:
Theological College

Exeter:
St. Luke's College
University College *

Gloucester:
School of Domestic Science †

Hereford:
Training College †

Hull:
Training College †

Kelham:
House of the Sacred Mission

Leeds:
Rawdon College
Training College *
University *

Leicester:
University College

Lichfield:
Theological College

Lincoln:
Theological College
Training College †

Liverpool:
Edge Hill Training College †
University *

London:
Avery Hill Training College †
Battersea Polytechnic †
Bedford College †
Birkbeck College *
Blanch Smith Pianoforte School †
Borough Road Training College

London (cont.):

Chelsea College of Physical Education †
Chelsea College of St. Mark and St. John
City and Guilds Engineering College
Clapham High School Training Department †
Dartford, Bergman Osterberg Physical Training College †
Day Training College *
East London College *
Froebel Educational Institute †
Furzedown Training College †
Gipsy Hill Training College †
Goldsmith's Training College *
Guy's Hospital
Hackney and New College *
Home and Colonial Training College †
Imperial College of Science and Technology *
King's College and Hospital *
King's College for Women, Domestic Science Department †
London Hospital

London (cont.):

Maria Grey Training College †
Middle Temple
Middlesex Hospital
National School of Cookery †
Regent's Park College
Rochester and Southwark Deaconess House †
Royal Academy
Royal Academy of Music †
Royal College of Science †
Royal Free Hospital †
Royal Holloway College †
St. Bartholomew's Hospital
St. Catherine's Deaconess House †
St. Christopher's College
St. Gabriel's Training College †
St. John's College
St. Katherine's Training College †
St. Mary's Training College †
St. Thomas' Hospital
School of Economics *
School of Medicine for Women †
Southlands Training College †
Spurgeon's College
Stockwell Training College †

London (cont.):
- Tobias Matthay Pianoforte School †
- University College and Hospital *
- Warrington Training College †
- Westfield College †
- Westminster Training College
- Whitelands Training College †
- Woolwich Polytechnic

Loughborough:
- Technical College

Manchester:
- Baptist College
- College of Domestic Science †
- College of Technology *
- Didsbury College
- Fairfield College
- Hartley College
- Lancashire College
- United Methodist College
- University *

Mirfield:
- College of the Resurrection

Newcastle:
- Armstrong College *
- College of Medicine *
- Kenton Lodge Training College †

Northampton:
- Technical College

Nottingham:
- Paton College
- University College *

Oxford:
- Cuddesdon College
- Educational Training Hostel †
- Home Students †
- Lady Margaret Hall †
- Mansfield College
- St. Hilda's Hall †
- St. Hugh's Hall †
- Somerville College †
- University
- Wycliffe Hall

Peterborough:
- Training College †

Plymouth:
- Technical College *

Portsmouth:
- Day Training College †
- Municipal College *
- St. Andrew's House †

Reading:
- University College *

Richmond:
- Richmond College

Saffron Walden:
- Training College †

Sheffield:
- University *

Southampton :
University College *
Warminster :
St. Boniface College
York :
St. John's Training College

IRELAND

Belfast :
Assembly's Hall
Edgehill Theological College
Queen's University *
Dublin :
Alexandra College †
Church of Ireland Training College *
Trinity College *

SCOTLAND

Aberdeen :
Gray's School of Art †
School of Domestic Science †
Training College †
United Free Church College
University *
University Missionary Association
Dundee :
Training College †
University College *
Edinburgh :
Church of Scotland Deaconess House †
Coates Hall
Free Church College
New College *
Provincial Training College †
Edinburgh (cont.) :
Royal College of Surgeons
St. George's Training College †
University *
University Divinity Hall
Women's Missionary College †
Glasgow :
Provincial Training College †
School of Art †
Technical College *
United Free Church College
University *
West of Scotland Agricultural College *
St. Andrews :
St. Mary's College
University *

APPENDIX

WALES

Aberystwyth :
Calvinistic Methodist College
University College *

Bala :
Calvinistic Methodist College

Bangor :
Baptist College
Normal College *
University College *

Barry :
Training College †

Cardiff :
University College *

Carmarthen :
Presbyterian College

Lampeter :
St. David's College

Llandaff :
St. Michael's College

Swansea :
Training College †
University College *

British Universities and Colleges Represented

Universities, Colleges and Hospital Schools ...	132
Theological Colleges	66
	198

Number of Delegates

	Men.	*Women.*	*Total.*
Students studying in British Colleges	785	653	1,438
Delegates from other lands ...	99	40	139
Professors, Tutors, Speakers, Missionaries, Visitors, Representatives and Members of Missionary, Social and other Societies	229	202	431
			2,008

APPENDIX

Countries Represented at the Conference

Abyssinia
Australia
Austria
Bulgaria
Burma
Canada
Ceylon
China
Czecho-slovakia
Denmark
Egypt
England
Estonia
Finland
France
Germany
Holland
Hungary
India
Ireland
Jamaica
Japan
Latvia
Nigeria
Norway
Palestine
Poland
Roumania
Russia
Scotland
South Africa
Sweden
Switzerland
Uganda
United States of America
Wales
West Africa
West Indies

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